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Partisan Review 2

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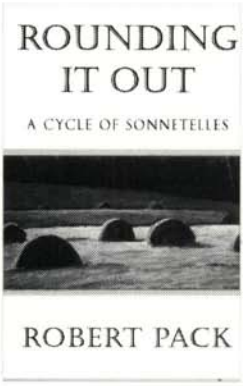

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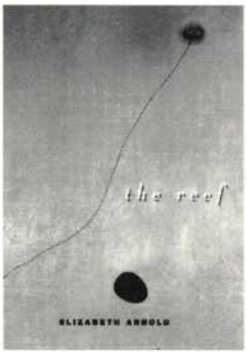

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COMMENTS

Greenberg's Esthetics Clement Greenberg's analysis of the nature of art is especially interesting because it is the work of what might be called an amateur esthetician. Unlike such professional estheticians as Croce, Bergson, and Dewey, among others, whose writing on esthetics was based on their general philosophic principles, Greenberg is simply concerned with keeping his eye on the object. And he stresses the essential point, commonly ignored or forgotten, that esthetic pleasures differ from sensual ones.

Particularly valuable is Greenberg's linkage of judgment with the experience of art, which he partially got from Kant. But there is also one fault in this respect, for Greenberg does not distinguish between the astute critic of art—and the sophisticated fellow artist—whose judgment enters into the history of art, and the ignorant onlooker, who is simply describing himself. Incidentally, it is the same kind of failure to distinguish the two that marks Emerson's notion of self-reliance, where he also failed to distinguish between the self-reliance of first-rate minds and that of the ordinary, uneducated people.

Kafka Cynthia Ozick has a brilliant discussion of Kafka and his translators in the January 11, 1999 issue of *The New Yorker*. Ozick clearly has become one of the best literary critics writing at the present time. She is particularly to be noted for what might be called "creative criticism," for her writing is to be valued for its language as well as its ideas. She also includes in her piece a comment on the new translations of *The Trial* and *The Castle*, where she makes the point that perfect translations are ultimately impossible, and that the translators of Kafka reflect their cultural origins.

I didn't think anything new could be added to Kafka criticism, but in addition to her remarks on translation, Ozick has ferreted out and put together the contradictory forces and ideas that went into Kafka's thinking. Perhaps I should add an observation about Kafka's writing. I have a hunch that some of his fiction is not only dream-like, but actually contains elements of dreams that Kafka had in the long nights when he was writing, waking, and dreaming. Of course, this is difficult to prove, but it is a suggestion.

WP

Across Cultures When the Jewish philologist Victor Klemperer finally wanted to escape from Hitler's Germany with his non-Jewish wife, Eva, it was too late, no country would have them. Confined to his house and backyard in Dresden, and later on in hiding, he valiantly kept a record of the hardships in the Nazis' ever-tightening net. *I Shall Bear Witness* is an apt

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title for the daily entries in his diary while living in increasingly dangerous conditions—with menacing neighbors, dwindling resources, loss of the right to buy tobacco and sweets, to drive a car or take public transportation, and so on. In his other book, *Lingua Tertii: The Language of the Third Reich*, he described the value of this diary as "always help[ing] me over the hump: observe, study, impress on your memory what is happening, tomorrow it seems different, tomorrow you already experience it differently." After I read the German edition over two years ago—two volumes (1,690 pages)—I praised it in these pages. But because the text was unavailable in English, my review received scarce attention. The recent raves and commentaries in *The New York Times* and elsewhere mention only parenthetically that the translation of the second volume is expected next year.

This exemplifies yet again that Americans receive some information about three years after other nationals, just because they don't study foreign languages. By contrast, even before Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* was translated into German, debates about it abounded in Berlin, Frankfurt and Vienna. Some would argue that ultimately it doesn't matter whether or not we remain ignorant of esoteric literature from abroad since, after all, English has become the world's *lingua franca*, the language spoken where it matters, in the marketplace.

However, those who have read the winter issue of *Foreign Policy* are bound to have second thoughts. There, the linguist Joshua Fishman predicts a "New Linguistic Order": he expects that English will continue being used among diplomats, air traffic controllers and on the Internet as the "killer language." But this very dominance of English, he goes on, creates a sort of backlash against "the vitriol generated by grand-scale globalization," which induces people around the world to increasingly promote their regional languages: Swahili in East Africa, Hausa in West Africa, Mandarin Chinese in China, Spanish in the Americas, varieties of Pidgin English in Australia and Papua New Guinea, and Arabic—the language of Islam and regional trade—in North Africa and Southeast Asia, among others. Globalization, Fishman explains, lacks the authenticity of local languages. They are the symbolic functions linking people to their past, and to those around them.

Fishman notes, also, that Navajo children in Rough Rock, Arizona scored higher in English reading competency than those who were first schooled in English. Clearly, multilingual education makes for flexibility and choice, and for the possibility of diverse people to interact, unlike bilingualism which is said to boost self-esteem. Moreover, Fishman's study corroborates again that fluency in a foreign language improves the mastery of one's native tongue. In sum, Europeans as well as so-called Third World people will be better placed to compete in the global market than

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Americans. Already, "foreigners" over here are picked by CEOs to assist them with overseas affairs, and much else. Thus we had better get on the ball rather than be caught by surprise when the "vitriol" Fishman refers to catches up. In other words, instead of addressing language teaching in terms of costs, or of one psychological nostrum or another, it behooves us to teach foreign languages if we want to retain our edge in the global economy, and to create and hold on to production and jobs. Even the speculation about the ultimate relation between the euro and the dollar, and all that this entails, will depend on it.

Two Holocaust Films *The Last Days* and *Life is Beautiful* are the current Holocaust films, the former an impressive Spielberg documentary, the latter a beautiful tearjerker. During the same week, the audience at the former, for the most part, consisted of persons born in Europe and their middle-aged children, whereas the latter drew a larger, more diverse and somewhat younger group. It has been assumed that poetry after the Holocaust is impossible, at least for anyone who barely escaped a death camp. But this does not seem to hold for films: the less they adhere to the brutal reality, the better they are attended, and the greater the distortions, the more they whip up the imagination—of filmmakers as well as viewers. *Life is Beautiful*, which shows a father's alleged self-sacrifice for his beautiful little boy, is heartwrenching, but is a total invention. *The Last Days*, which intersperses the stories of five survivors with visual accounts recorded at the end of World War II is evocative, hard to take, and yet must be multiplied by the fate of the six million people who no longer can document anything, and by their relatives who still keep wondering just when, where, and how their dead ended up.

On the one hand, to try preventing future atrocities we must nip the prejudices of anti-Semitism and racism in the bud, and can do so only by exposing as many people as possible to its extreme, inhuman consequences. On the other hand, it is difficult to entice individuals to spend an evening watching an unrelenting story of organized murder, emaciated corpses and merciless brutality. That is the dilemma. To teach the Holocaust as fact reaches few people, particularly among the unaffected. To make it more palatable, however minimally, not only trivializes it but renders it toothless. Some of the remaining survivors of Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, Maidanek, and other such camps, after a life of silence now spend their days lecturing about it to school children. But whatever we do, the question of whether or not we will be able to eradicate racism and anti-Semitism remains an open one—especially while both the radical left and the radical right claim the high ground for their political ends.

EK

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CLEMENT GREENBERG

"A Draft of Chapter One" from *Homemade Esthetics*

Art can be neither defined nor described satisfactorily. We can recognize it, point to it, but we can't get hold of it with words or concepts. In order to do that, we would have to be able to observe much more than we've been able to of what goes on inside us when we experience or make art. But neither introspection nor experimental psychology has gotten close enough to the mental or psychic processes involved in the experiencing or making of art.

This imperviousness to words and concepts—to discourse—isn't particular to art; it belongs to all intuitive activity. Art, esthetic experience, makes itself evident solely as a matter of intuition, of direct, unmediated insight. So does ordinary sense perception, so does introspection. We can't reason or infer our way of seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, tasting, or sensing differences of temperature. Nor can we reason or infer our way of knowledge of what goes on inside our consciousness. In short, we haven't been able to get close enough to intuition by means other than itself to substitute anything else for it. We know intuition only through intuition itself. Which means that if you can't exercise intuition spontaneously nobody can teach or show you how to. It's up to you alone to see, hear, touch, smell, taste. Similarly, it's up to you alone to get art *as* art, esthetic experience *as* esthetic experience. That is the way it is with intuitive activity: the *how* of it can't be communicated, transmitted or taught; and because the how, the means, of it can't be communicated or taught, neither can the *what,* the results, of it be.

There does happen, however, to be effective agreement about the results of sensory intuition and, to a certain useful extent, about those of introspective intuition too. All passably sane and physically intact people

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Editor's note: "A Draft of Chapter One" was to have been the opening of a book on esthetics; Greenberg had been refining his views on the subject since giving a series of seminars at Bennington College in 1971, but never completed the projected book. *Homemade Esthetics*, edited by Janice Van Horne Greenberg, includes this piece along with the seminars and related essays. It will be published by Oxford University Press in May.

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recognize the same colors, noises, surfaces, tastes, and smells in much the same way, whether or not they react to them in the same way or apply exactly the same words to them. And they also agree that two plus two equals four, and that when they look into themselves they can remember certain things that other people in the position to decide will agree took place. On the basis of these kinds of agreement we are able to communicate with one another and embark confidently on chains of inference or reasoning. The results of *esthetic* intuition are not that universally agreed upon, not that self-evident, therefore cannot be reasoned from as confidently, and do not provide so reliable a basis for communication.

Sensory and introspective intuition—which I'll call intuition in the primary mode—is required for survival as well as for communication. Esthetic intuition is not. Intuition in the primary mode is instrumental; it's a means to ends other than itself, ends that include and go beyond survival, far beyond it, but which are still external ends. Esthetic intuition contains within itself its own ends and purposes, its own self-sufficing satisfactions. Primary intuition furnishes data for action and re-action, for identification and classification; it leads to possibilities and consequences; it founds useful knowledge. Esthetic intuition gives matter, substance, but not data; it stops with itself, hangs up on itself, rests in itself, and is valued for itself. Nor can its results, unlike those of primary intuition, be abstracted from itself. In esthetic intuition means and ends fuse indissolubly. Esthetic intuition is all that esthetic intuition is about. It's its own value. And all that esthetic intuition can intuit is value, just as all that primary intuition can intuit is properties (to adopt G. E. Moore's distinction).

The difference between primary and esthetic intuition is not blurred by the fact that the former is a necessary precondition to the latter: that you do have to be sentient in the primary mode in order to have experience in the esthetic mode. That is, that if you don't have use of your senses, or are incapable of registering what goes on inside you, you're not only unable to survive, but are also unable to have esthetic experience. It still remains that, in order to experience anything esthetically, you have to make a definite shift from the mode of primary intuition into that of esthetic intuition.

Yet any and everything that can be intuited in the primary mode can also be intuited, experienced, in the esthetic one. Which means that any and everything that enters perception and/or consciousness can be experienced esthetically. But even more: what consciousness itself generates can be experienced esthetically; I mean mental processes like reasoning and generalizing, though these are not intuitive in themselves. In short, there's nothing that we can be aware of in any way that we can't also be aware of or intuit esthetically.

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It also happens to be the case that what is called *art* cannot be definitely separated from esthetic experience in general. Anything said about the latter can also be said about the experience of art. Anything experienced in the esthetic mode can be said to be experienced as art too, art as such. The notion of art, put to the test, proves to depend not on skillful making (as the ancients held), but on an act of mental distancing: art means simply, and not so simply, a turn of attitude toward something you perceive or introspect. I call this turn an "act of distancing" because it brings about a mind-set by which whatever it is that's perceived is accepted for its own experienced sake, and not for what it means in any other terms—not for what it may signify in terms other than itself, not for what it suggests in the way of consequences, not for what it means to you yourself as a particular person with particular personal or practical or theoretical interests. These interests and these terms are what you become "distanced" from by the turn of attitude involved in esthetic, and therefore artistic, experience.

Art, then, like the esthetic in general, can coincide with everything and anything conceivable. Anything and everything conceivable can be converted into something that takes effect as art. There turns out, accordingly, to be such a thing as universal art, art at large, art that is or can be realized anywhere and at any time—even if it is for the most part inadvertent, momentary, and solipsistic art: that is, private and unsuitable to being adequately communicated *as art* by the person who experiences it. The big difference between this art at large and what the world agrees to call art is between art that is not communicated to another person's attention and art that is. The one I call private and "raw" art and the other I call public and formalized art. They are different, but for present purposes I don't consider them radically different. They are both areas of experience constituted by a certain kind of end-value. And through their orientation to this kind of value both varieties of art shade into one another, the difference between them becoming a question of degrees of value more than anything else—more even than a question of communicability, or of the difference between private and public.

When we deal with esthetic experience or art *qua* esthetic experience or *qua* art—as nothing but esthetic experience or art—we deal with values and valuing. And as I've already said, the values here are end-values, intrinsic or ultimate ones. Art isn't the domain of any such values. There are moral values that are ultimate, and these too are (as I think) accessible only to intuition, to direct insight. Yet not all moral or ethical values are intrinsic, ultimate ones; some of them are instrumental—that is, means to other, further moral values—and which, because they are instrumental, can be discovered through reasoning, not intuition. This is not true of any esthetic or artistic values: they are all final intrinsic values, none of them

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instrumental. It is in getting itself taken as final, intrinsic value that art, or esthetic experience, identifies and realizes itself, makes itself felt for what it uniquely is.

If art, or esthetic experience, has its essential reality as value, then esthetic intuition is essentially an affair of valuing, evaluating, judging. With the same immediacy with which primary intuition gets the properties of things—descriptive, identifying attributes (to use G. E. Moore's distinction)—esthetic intuition gets a certain kind of intrinsic value, and in getting this value appraises it. Esthetic intuition does this automatically, otherwise it's not esthetic intuition. In short, you don't, and can't, experience art as art without simultaneously judging it; to the extent that something is experienced esthetically, to that same extent is it evaluated and judged, whether consciously or unconsciously.

Esthetic judging, esthetic valuing means making distinctions of extent or degree, of more and less. There's no more separating this from esthetic judgment than there is separating the latter from esthetic experience as such. There's the kind of judgment that comes out as a flat either-or, yes or no, guilty or not guilty, but this isn't the usual esthetic kind. The latter means grading and shading, even measuring—though not with the quantitative exactness of what is ordinarily thought of as measuring. Esthetic judgment is more on the order of *evaluating* than of judging pure and simple. That it tends to go on without words or symbols or signs—without calculation or even meditation, if not quite unconsciously—this doesn't make it any the less an affair of evaluating. Esthetic intuition distinguishes and weighs values with the same immediacy as primary intuition does physical properties, and it operates just as "opaquely."

Esthetic evaluating has to do with liking more and less, and with not liking more and less. What is liked or not liked is *affect*. Esthetic experience, esthetic value or quality are affect, a certain way of being moved or stirred. (Affect is not to be equated here simply with emotion; affect can comprehend something more or other than emotion.) It's the degrees of liking or not liking that are affect, and these translate themselves into degrees of value. But all these "moments"—affect, liking, value, quality, evaluating—are synonymous with one another and distinguishable only in discursive reflection on esthetic experience, and only for purposes of conceptualization. In actual esthetic experience they are one. Which doesn't mean at all that this "one" is simple; otherwise I wouldn't be using different words or "models" in the effort to isolate it. . . .

That esthetic judgment is not voluntary—not decided *by* you, but rather *for* you—should not need emphasizing. All you have to do is reflect for a moment on what happens when you listen to, look at, or read works of art. But people do behave as if you chose what to like or not like, and

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as though your choices betrayed good or bad intentions. This is why what's called *odium aestheticum* (literally, "esthetic hatefulness") abounds, why people invest disagreements about art with so much personal rancor. Yet it remains that you yourself no more choose to like or not like an art work than you choose to see the sun as bright or the night as dark. All intuitive reactions, whether primary or esthetic, are involuntary (for that matter, so are all rational or intelligent ones). They are given, not taken. All that's taken or willed or decided when it comes to esthetic experience is the directing and focusing of attention (and about what happens with attention, no discipline of knowledge, whether psychological or philosophical, has yet been able to say much that's useful). To put it another way: esthetic judgments, being indissoluble from, inseparable and indistinguishable from esthetic experience itself; being in fact constitutive of that kind of experience—esthetic judgments, being all that, are reflexive, automatic. They are not arrived at by being deliberately reflected upon, weighed, pondered, or decided; they are—once again—given, given because they are inherent in esthetic experience itself, because they *are* that experience. And because they are given, they are received.

(Of course, there is, and has been, much dishonesty on the reporting of esthetic reactions. There's no one, probably, who professes an interest in art who's not been guilty of this kind of dishonesty at one time or another. There's the person who looks at the nameplate on a painting before deciding how to look at the painting itself. There's the person who prefers the Beatles to Mozart but doesn't dare admit it, even to himself. It depends, of course, on what circles you frequent. There's also the person who lets nonesthetic interests or fixed ideas interfere with his reactions. Here it's less a question of dishonesty than of disloyalty—disloyalty to art. But whether it's one or the other, it's still bad faith in the context of the esthetic. And it may be the prevalence of bad faith that accounts for a lot of *odium aestheticum*. But it has to be allowed at the same time that bad faith of this or any other kind is prevalent in society at large.)

Immanuel Kant (who had more insights into the nature of esthetic experience than anyone else I'm aware of) held that the "judgment of taste" always "precedes" the "pleasure" gained from the esthetic "object." It's not necessary here to go into the reasons he gave for asserting this. I'd rather deal with the reasons my own experience provides for agreeing with it. His assertion in itself points up—once again—how integral the "moment" of judgment is to esthetic experience as such. My surmise is that the very involuntariness of the intuition which *is an esthetic judgment* enables you to *commit* yourself to the "pleasure"—or "dys-pleasure"—of the intuition itself. That the judgment is received rather than taken makes it a necessary one as it were, and its necessity frees you, surrenders you, to

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the commitment, to all its spontaneity and "purity." A judgment taken deliberately and consideredly would be a limiting and contingent rather than a liberating one; the "pleasure" or "dys-pleasure" would be infected with the possibility of qualifications and doubts; it would be a notion instead of an intuition—at least to start with. In short: if the "judgment of taste" "precedes" the "pleasure," it's in order to *give* the "pleasure." And the pleasure in turn gives the judgment.

Whether Kant's separation of the "judgment" from the "pleasure" is meant in a temporal or in a quasi-logical sense, I can't tell from what he says. My own experience insists on the latter sense. I find it impossible to separate the "moment" of judging from the "moment" of pleasure in any but a metaphorically logical sense, certainly not in a temporal one. The judging and the pleasure mean one another are synchronous and synonymous. The pleasure or dys-pleasure is *in* the judging; the latter gives the pleasure or dys-pleasure, and at the same time the pleasure or dys-pleasure gives the judgment. They fuse with one another. That one thing makes another possible does not have to mean that it precedes it in time. What is logically discrete does not have to be temporally discrete. Conceptual thought tries to wrestle experience into its own domain by spreading out in time or space things that exist instantaneously and, sometimes, in unspecifiable places. . . .

At the beginning I said that what goes on inside us when we experience art can't be adequately observed and therefore can't be adequately known. Then I went on to say that esthetic experience always identifies itself through, and as, a value judgment that consists in an affect, which consists, in turn, of liking or not liking. Saying all this still didn't mean saying anything really about what goes on inside you when experiencing art. But now I will make a stab at suggesting—as best as I can make out through introspection—something of what goes on inside *me* when I experience art.

Again, I have to start from Kant. Not that he offered a clue in advance as to the results of my introspection, but he did anticipate some of the terms I have to use in describing those results. In *The Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* he speaks of esthetic "pleasure" as consisting in the "free play" and "harmony" of the "cognitive faculties," in their "harmonious activity," and in the easier play of both mental powers—imagination and reason—animated by their "mutual harmony." The "harmony," "free play," "animation," and "activity" are occasioned by the esthetic object, which is itself a "given representation" such as is "generally suitable for cognition." This, despite there being no cognition as such, no addition to knowledge—or food for knowledge—in esthetic experience as such (which doesn't mean that some sort of knowledge isn't usually a corollary

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of esthetic experience, even if it's only the knowledge of having had the experience).

I don't have to accept Kant's designation of the mental or cognitive faculties in order to find out that the gist of what he says about the role of cognitive activity in esthetic experience is confirmed by what I make of my own esthetic experience. As I see it, as I sense it, as I introspect it, the pleasure of art—when it does give pleasure—consists in a sensation of exalted cognitiveness that transcends cognition as such. It's as though for the time being I could command, by dint of transcendent knowing, everything that could possibly affect my consciousness and, with that, my existence. *I know,* and yet without having anything specific or definite to know. Definiteness or specificity in this respect would extinguish the sensation, the feeling, the state. For it's a question of "ness"-ness, not of what-ness; of a state of consciousness, not of a gain or addition to consciousness. The more diffuse or "general" the state or sensation of cognitiveness, the more embracing it is, and the more embracing, the more exalted and exalting. It is by its greater "generality" of diffuseness, which is also its elusiveness, that better art makes itself evident as better.

What is ordinarily meant by emotion or feeling is swallowed up in esthetic experience. It's as though the state or sensation of cognitiveness contained emotion, along with sensuousness and knowledge and intellection, as things transcended—contained and transcended—in a totality of sentience (to borrow Susanne Langer's term but to change its application somewhat). Emotion, like immediate sense perception and knowledge and rules of logic, becomes "known" and "felt" and "sensed" from outside itself, from a vantage point that commands and controls it for the purposes of sheer consciousness. The "pleasure" of esthetic experience is the pleasure of consciousness; the pleasure that consciousness takes in possessing itself and its powers and the operation of those powers. In satisfactory esthetic experience consciousness revels as it were in the sense of itself (as theologians used to say that God did).

It's in this state of exalted, transcending cognitiveness that esthetic affect, esthetic quality or value, consists; rather, this state is that affect, that quality, that value. All three mean the same thing. The more and the less the degrees of differentiations of esthetic quality or value are the more and the less the degrees and gradations of this state, of its intensity and scope. Inferior art or esthetic experience shows itself, precisely, in failing to bring about a state that is high enough—or intense enough or extensive enough. But all art, all esthetic experience, good and bad, superior and inferior, identifies itself by promising this state of transcending cognitiveness, or by intimating a promise of it. And it's only taste that can tell to what extent this promise is kept.

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AMOS OZ

A Log in a Freshet: On the Beginning of Kafka's "A Country Doctor"

Kafka's story "A Country Doctor" (1919) is the tale of a country doctor who is summoned on a blustery, snowy night to the bedside of a seriously ill patient. The doctor answers the call, overcomes several strange obstacles, and manages to arrive at the patient's bedside, but is unable to help him. In the end he finds himself "with an earthly vehicle, unearthly horses, old man that I am, I wander astray." At the story's end the doctor says, "Betrayed! Betrayed! A false alarm on the night bell once answered—it cannot be made good, not ever." This closing sentence directs the reader back to the story's beginning, in order to investigate exactly where the doctor made the one and only mistake that can never be rectified. On the face of it, the story's end contains a certain moral. Seemingly, if the doctor had only known this moral early in the night, he would have been able to avoid the fatal mistake altogether.

But what in fact has the doctor, or the reader, learned by the end of the story? What was the mistake, and what is the moral? What is the "false alarm"? Could the doctor have chosen not to respond? Could he have known from the beginning that it was a false alarm? Is there a way (in this story, and perhaps beyond it) to distinguish between a false alarm and a true one? Ultimately, did the doctor indeed respond to the call or was he, after all, unwillingly catapulted on his way?

Actually, there is no alarm, no night bell at all in the beginning of the story—not a false alarm, or any kind of alarm. On the other hand, there is, at the beginning, a precise report of a factual, credible occurrence, in the course of which a nightmarish twist of events takes place. The reader will indeed have trouble locating a definite point at which this twist occurs. As in many of Kafka's works, there is no sudden change of gears, but, rather, a sort of intangible blurring of reality itself, a slippery, elusive distortion of dimensions, a metamorphosis through which everything is gradually suffused with the shades of a nightmare.

> I was in great perplexity; I had to start on an urgent journey; a seriously ill patient was waiting for me in a village ten miles off; a thick blizzard of snow filled all the wide spaces between him and me; I had

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a gig, a light gig with big wheels, exactly right for our country roads; muffled in furs, my bag of instruments in my hand, I was in the courtyard all ready for the journey; but there was no horse to be had, no horse. My own horse had died in the night, worn out by the fatigues of this icy winter; my servant girl was now running round the village trying to borrow a horse; but it was hopeless, I knew it, and I stood there forlornly, with the snow gathering more and more thickly upon me, more and more unable to move. In the gateway the girl appeared, alone, and waved the lantern; of course, who would lend a horse at this time for such a journey? I strode through the courtyard once more; I could see no way out; in my confused distress I kicked at the dilapidated door of the yearlong uninhabited pigsty. It flew open and flapped to and fro on its hinges. A steam and smell as of horses came out from it. A dim stable lantern was swinging inside from a rope. A man, crouching on his hams in that low space, showed an open blue-eyed face. "Shall I yoke up?" he asked, crawling out on all fours. I did not know what to say and merely stooped down to see what else was in the sty. The servant girl was standing beside me. "You never know what you're going to find in your own house," she said, and we both laughed. "Hey there, Brother, hey there, Sister!" called the groom, and two horses, enormous creatures with powerful flanks, one after the other, their legs tucked close to their bodies, each well-shaped head lowered like a camel's, by sheer strength of buttocking squeezed out through the door hole which they filled entirely. But at once they were standing up, their legs long and their bodies steaming thickly. "Give him a hand," I said, and the willing girl hurried to help the groom with the harnessing. Yet hardly was she beside him when the groom clipped hold of her and pushed his face against hers. She screamed and fled back to me; on her cheek stood out in red the marks of two rows of teeth. "You brute," I yelled in fury, "do you want a whipping?" but in the same moment reflected that the man was a stranger; that I did not know where he came from, and that of his own free will he was helping me out when everyone else had failed me. As if he knew my thoughts he took no offense at my threat but, still busied with the horses, only turned round once towards me. "Get in," he said then, and indeed: everything was ready. A magnificent pair of horses, I observed, such as I had never sat behind, and I climbed in happily. "But I'll drive, you don't know the way," I said. "Of course," said he, "I'm not coming with you anyway, I'm staying with Rose." "No," shrieked Rose, fleeing into the house with a justified presentiment that her fate was inescapable; I heard the door chain rattle as he put it up; I heard the key turn in the lock; I could see, moreover, how she put out the lights in the entrance hall and in further flight all through the rooms to keep herself from being discovered. "You're coming with me," I said to the groom, "or I won't

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> go, urgent as my journey is. I'm not thinking of paying for it by handing the girl over to you." "Gee up!" he said; clapped his hands; the gig whirled off like a log in a freshet; I could just hear the door of my house splitting and bursting as the groom charged at it and then I was deafened and blinded by a storming rush that steadily buffeted all my senses.

The story's title introduces us to the first-person narrator even before he says a single word: a country doctor. He then presents all the initial data in a matter-of-fact tone, almost like a police report; as though he was testifying before a jury, as though he must defend himself against criminal charges.

His condition: great perplexity. His problem: an urgent journey, a seriously ill patient, a village ten miles off, a blizzard, no horse and no hope of getting one. The measures he took: 1. Sent a servant to borrow a horse, despite the slim chance of success. 2. Stood in the yard, in the snow, ready and waiting for the journey, so that if the servant were to borrow a horse after all, not a minute would be lost. 3. Walked around the yard again. 4. Even kicked the door of the abandoned pigsty, in case he might find something there. 5. When the horses and the groom appeared, wasted no time in questioning the significance of their wondrous appearance. 6. Did not remain silent at the groom's attack on the girl, scolded him but did not tarry—getting to the seriously ill patient was still his highest priority. 7. Changed his priorities, when he realized that the groom was about to abuse Rose, and decided not to abandon her. 8. But when the groom made the horses dash forward, lost control over them and they galloped ahead dragging the wagon "like a log in a freshet."

The defense case appears solid and untainted. No grand jury could convict the doctor for his conduct at any stage of the events. Nevertheless, at the story's beginning and through to its end, the central questions remain unanswered. Moreover, they are never even asked.

Of what, exactly, is the doctor being accused? What allegation, what charge does he struggle so desperately to refute? Where do the accusations come from? Who convicts him? Who condemns him, in the end, to be "Naked, exposed to the frost of this most unhappy of ages, with an earthly vehicle, unearthly horses, old man that I am, I wander astray." And for what sin?

About one third of the story deals with the doctor's attempts to defend himself against an accusation that is never made, against a prosecutor who never once appears in this story. In addition to the logical and solid apology in the beginning of the story, another "defense plea"

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appears later, very different from the initial one, plaintive, awash in self-pity.

> I was the district doctor and did my duty to the uttermost, to the point where it became almost too much. I was badly paid and yet generous and helpful to the poor. . . .What was I doing there in that endless winter! My horse was dead, and not a single person in the village would lend me another. I had to get my team out of the pigsty; if they hadn't chanced to be horses I should have had to travel with swine. . . .I had once more been called out needlessly, I was used to that, the whole district made my life a torment with my night bell, but that I should have to sacrifice Rose this time as well. . .was too much to ask. . . .

In contrast to the defense brief in the beginning of the story, this monologue indicates, not an attempt to persuade, but an effort to arouse pity. Perhaps it is a monologue beyond despair, since the speaker has at the beginning expressed his desire to die (as soon as Rose is safe), and in the end he sums up his visit to the patient—and his whole life—as an irreparable failure.

Yet the opening of the story is, at least superficially, a solid, irreproachable defense. It is a dramatic defense: it is written almost as one long sentence, a multi-claused sentence whose parts are defined mainly by semicolons. The doctor's testimony is given in the present tense, like a live broadcast ("at the moment she went to him and here, yes, the groom grabs her and knocks his face against hers. The girl lets out a shriek and flees toward me"). There are several such mid-sentence transitions from past to present tense.

The doctor, who kicks the door open with his foot, delivers, to his astonishment, a groom and a pair of horses from the abandoned pigsty. Like the appearance of the nose from the roll in Gogol's story, the appearance of the groom and the horses in "A Country Doctor" is described almost as a birth: the groom crawled out "on all fours." And the horses "one after the other, their legs tucked close to their bodies. . .by sheer strength of buttocking squeezed out through the. . .hole which they filled entirely. . .their bodies steaming thickly." Biting Rose's cheek is the groom's first act, for which the doctor-narrator calls him a "brute." The groom's lust and his assault on the girl are indeed bestial. The doctor could hear the "door of my house splitting and bursting as the groom charged at it." At the same time, the groom fills the familiar role of the devil in a folk tale, proposing and delivering an unnatural deal, leaping from nowhere, offering to grant

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the customer something he desperately wants, but in return taking something far more meaningful. Here the doctor backs away from the deal at the last minute, turning it down ("I'm not thinking of paying for it by handing the girl over to you"), but the deal is forced upon him: once he agreed to use the devil's horses, he could not avoid paying the devil's price.

What appears at the beginning of the story as an effort to resolve a transportation problem—how can the doctor get to the bedside of his seriously ill patient on this snowy, stormy night—turns out to be an affair loaded with shame and guilt: the doctor's horse has died of overexertion, he was unable to protect the girl, and he also failed to cure the patient. Perhaps this is why the beginning—and in fact most of the story—is rendered as an apology. It is, however, an absurd, circular apology, almost reminiscent of the folk song, "There's a hole in my bucket": the first thing cannot be done for lack of the second, which is prevented by constraints of the third, which results from a shortage of the fourth, which can be filled only if the first thing is obtained. If we were to schematize the plot of "A Country Doctor" as a protocol of an interrogation, the absurdity of the doctor's condition, and of his defense, would become even more evident.

If everything is ready for the journey, including "a light gig with big wheels," why do you not go?

Because there is no horse.

Where is the horse?

Died last night.

And why did the horse die?

From "the fatigues of this icy winter."

And why was the horse fatigued in the icy winter?

Because "the whole district made my life a torment with my night bell."

And why was this call harder for you than others?

This time "I should have to sacrifice Rose."

And why did you abandon her? Why did you let the groom bite her face?

I reproached him. I threatened to whip him.

Why did you not whip him?

Because I immediately remembered "that the man was a stranger; that I did not know where he came from."

And why did you accept help from a stranger when you did not even know where he came from?

Because "of his own free will he was helping me out when everyone else failed me."

Why did the others fail you?

"The whole district made my life a torment."

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> And why did you not prevent him from breaking down the door and assaulting Rose?
>
> I tried. I ordered him to go with me, and, if not, "I won't go, urgent as my journey is."
>
> So why did you not cancel the journey?
>
> Because the groom started the horses so sharply that the gig "whirled off like a log in a freshet."
>
> But why did you put yourself into the hands of such a groom?
>
> Because a seriously ill patient was waiting for me, and I did not have a horse.

And it's roundabout again. (Actually, the same format repeats itself later, in the episode of the misdiagnosis. The doctor first failed to notice the boy's injury, then failed to help him, paradoxically, there was no way he could. There was no malpractice or misconduct on the doctor's part. He is a good man who can do no good.)

What then is the "opening contract" the reader is asked to accept with the beginning of this story?

Initially, the reader is expected to trust the doctor-narrator, to feel sympathy for this decent fellow who responds to a seriously ill patient's call for help on a snowy, stormy night and who is delayed by a mere technicality; the reader must also acknowledge the sense of moral and professional obligation that binds doctors to do their utmost, even to endanger themselves if necessary, in order to provide medical assistance to seriously ill patients. The exigencies the doctor-narrator presents at the beginning of his "testimony" help to engage the reader in the necessity to focus on the main point (that is, saving the patient) and not to waste energy on anything else. A horse that died last night of cold and fatigue belongs to another story; there is no time for that right now, and anyway it won't help the horse. The groom and the pair of splendid horses suddenly born from an abandoned pigsty—well, they certainly arouse amazement, but one doesn't ask too many questions in a time of crisis. The reader is invited to identify with the sense of urgency that drives the doctor to decide to use those horses without asking questions.

Even the stranger's first abuse of the girl does not justify a postponement, and the reader is expected to be satisfied with the doctor's rebuke.

In short: until the horses break into a gallop, the reader has no reason to criticize the doctor's considerations. But when the situation spins out of the narrator's control, the reader is invited to ask himself whether the situation was ever under control in the first place. Were the doctor's decisions really decisions? What has been presented as an eminently reasonable chain

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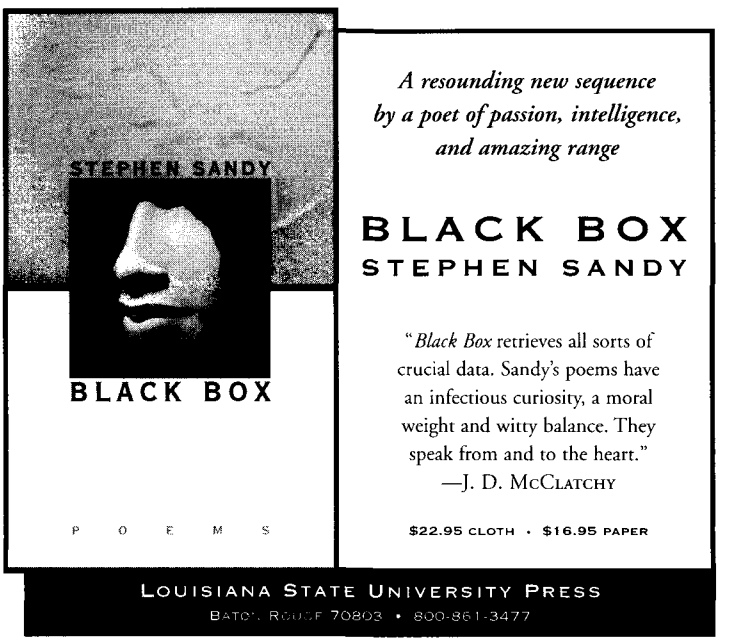
of calculations and decisions was actually no more than a nightmarish hallucination: the doctor has been deceived. He has responded to the false alarm of the night bell, and nothing can "be made good, not ever." Not only has the doctor been misled, but the reader too, so it seems, has been taken for a ride.

Because in fact there was no alarm. Furthermore, did not the doctor choose to cancel the journey at the last minute, to reject the horse-for-wench deal, only to have his choice overridden by brute force? After all, he does not set out on his way, but is, rather, thrown into the journey against his will.

In utter contradiction to the impression made at the beginning of the story and reemphasized at its end, "A Country Doctor" is not a story of crime and punishment, nor is it a fable about taking the wrong turn or making the wrong choice: the doctor's tragedy is not at all a result of his actions or failures. The apologetics are superfluous. The opening contract is only the object of the real, the inner, conflict. According to the terms of this inner, latent contract, the doctor is guilty *a priori*, convicted and sentenced from the start, despite his innocence, even before he responds to the false alarm and even before he begins his series of apologies. From the very beginning, the doctor is no more than a "log in a freshet." He is found guilty only because a man's guilt is always lying in wait for him. Rose seems to set the terms of Kafka's contract as they really are when she says, "you never know what you're going to find in your own house." Guilt is always crouching behind "the dilapidated door of the year-long uninhabited pigsty."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AMOS OZ

Huge Losses: On the Beginning of Chekhov's "Rothschild's Fiddle"

The title of Chekhov's story "Rothschild's Fiddle," first published in 1894, misleads the reader on four counts: the Rothschild in the story is not the famed philanthropist; he is not a fiddler; the fiddle does not belong to him until near the end of the story; he is not even the protagonist but merely a supporting character, a poor wedding piper, an impoverished Jew.

The fiddle in the title actually belongs to one Yakov Ivanov, known to all as "Bronze." This Bronze, a Jew-hating old man, vulgar and heartless, earns his living as a coffin-maker and sometimes, for a few kopeks, plays his violin at weddings with a raggedy group of Jewish musicians.

Although "Rothschild's Fiddle" was published in the same year as *Effi Briest,* it does not depict a world of harmony, nor even a world of endangered harmony. One can, however, find a certain similarity between the beginning of this story and the beginning of "A Country Doctor": the basic premise of the beginning, in both stories, is disproved in the course of the story. The opening contract collapses eventually, revealing, in retrospect, a very different type of contract: as in "A Country Doctor," here in Chekhov's story the reader will have to reread and reassess everything.

Chekhov's world, suffused with subtle social observations, faint sorrow and compassionate humor, is, of course, far removed from Kafka's nightmare world. But the contract enfolded in the beginning of this story (and in the beginning of several other Chekhov stories) is a misleading one. Like the contract in "A Country Doctor," it is full of holes.

> It was a small town, more miserable than a village, inhabited almost exclusively by old men who died so seldom it was very annoying. Moreover, very few coffins were needed at the hospital and gaol. In short, business was bad. If Yakov Ivanov had been a coffin-maker in some large, provincial town he would most likely have owned a house and been called Mr. Ivanov. But in this wretched dump he was simply Yakov, his street nickname was Bronze for some reason and he lived wretchedly, like any common peasant, in a tiny old one-roomed cottage, which housed himself, Marfa, a stove, a double bed, coffins, work-bench and all his household goods.

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> . . .The local police inspector had been ill for two years now and was wasting away. Yakov had impatiently waited for him to die, but the inspector moved to the main town in the district for treatment, and he darned well gave up the ghost there. This meant a loss of at least ten roubles, since the coffin would have been an expensive one lined with brocade. It was at night that Yakov was particularly plagued by thoughts of these losses. He would put his fiddle by his side on the bed and whenever he was haunted by any unpalatable thoughts, he would touch the strings, the fiddle would twang in the dark and he would feel better.

The tender sadness and the warm, forgiving humor might have left a stamp of sentimentality on "Rothschild's Fiddle" were they not balanced by an ice-cold selection of details, by a surgical conception of human nature and by a carefully measured distance between the characters and the truth. The characters are often unaware of this truth, or else they do not acknowledge it, but the reader is invited to recognize it between the lines. Here and in other stories, Chekhov establishes a precise equilibrium, as on a chemist's scale, between the ridiculous and the heartbreaking. The contract includes verbal understandings, as it were, between the narrator and the reader, a sort of non-paper consent, or secret appendix. Frequently the reader has to understand something by means of its opposite. Such, for instance, are the first sentences: a lamentation about the dearth of deaths in the village, about the old people who die "so seldom it was very annoying." This comes from the narrator, not from the protagonist, but the reader understands, after a moment of bewilderment, that the complaint is the grumbling of the coffin-maker, whose "business was bad."

Bronze and Marfa are an old, childless couple. The inventory of their humble hovel is counted by the narrator: "Marfa, a stove, a double bed, coffins, work-bench"—the woman, Marfa, is included in the list of furnishings—but the reader already knows that this narrator mixes his own voice with the voice of heartless Bronze.

Bronze accepts, most reluctantly, orders for children's coffins, and calls the business of preparing such coffins "wasting my time on such nonsense." This detail, which appears near the beginning of the story, attests to petty avarice (small coffins make for small profits). Yet, halfway into the story, the reader will learn that Bronze has erased from his memory the life and death of his only child, a fair-haired baby girl born to Marfa and him fifty years before. Only after Marfa's death, when Bronze suddenly remembers his disaster, will it become clear to the reader that Bronze has hardened his heart all these years in order to protect himself from the pain. His

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aversion to making coffins for children was not just an expression of imbecilic greed, but also a hint of his hidden aversion to the death of children: the sad melodies that issue from Bronze's violin at night are but a stammering peasant version of *Kindertotenlieder.*

The opening contract is misleading because the narrator deliberately adopts the point of view of the old coffin-maker, as well as his language and his terms of reference; in doing so, the narrator obligates the reader to perform a task of cautious "translation": avarice is also a code word for deep loneliness. Contempt for constructing coffins for children camouflages the pain of bereavement. The revulsion aroused in Bronze by the whining melodies of Rothschild's flute is actually a defense against the reopening of wounds. The loathing he feels for Rothschild and all the Yids is mixed up with a clumsy, aggressive effort to suppress in himself a certain gut solidarity with the sufferers. As for the huge losses that Bronze laments, in the course of the story they assume proportions of lamentation for a wasted life and for the "vanity of vanities" of the human condition.

The plot is simple, even minimal: the tale of a village coffin-maker who ekes out a living, supplementing his income by playing his fiddle at weddings. He is miserly, grumpy and quarrelsome, with a heart hardened against both death and life: all his days appear to him as a continuous accumulation of financial losses. One day his wife becomes ill, and with silent joy accepts her impending death as a long-awaited release from the vale of tears. Seeing her joy, the coffin-maker feels regret for having treated her with unrelenting harshness. He drags the sick woman to the village doctor's and begs—as though bargaining—the doctor's helper, the only one there, to cure her. But the hard-hearted old man shrugs and soon turns to the next patient. The couple returns home, and the husband measures his wife and begins to make her coffin. He enters this "loss" in his ledger. In her final hours, his wife tries to remind him of their dead baby but he cannot remember. After her funeral, he himself feels ill, and, venting his violent wrath on the Jewish piper, who had come up to speak to him, wanders to the river, where the street boys yell at him. At home he remembers the baby and sums up his entire life as a series of deficits and losses. He wills his violin to Rothschild. After the coffin-maker's death, the Jew produces ineffably sad melodies from this violin.

The four "deceptions" in the story's title (Rothschild is not the baron; Rothschild is not a fiddler; Rothschild is not the protagonist of the story; the fiddle is not his) are unexpectedly put to rights at the end of the story: Rothschild is indeed made wealthy by his inheritance as he becomes the owner of the violin; he ceases to be a piper and becomes a fiddler, carrying on Bronze's melody. And so the reader first encounters the facts enfolded in the title, then discovers that they are all false, only to find out, at the very last moment, that they have been belatedly validated.

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There is a subtle, elusive connection in this story between Jews and music, between music and soul. At first glance it seems that the story employs, through Bronze's perspective, a shopworn body of anti-Semitic clichés: the Yids are raucous, they smell of garlic, they are exploitative and greedy, whiny, cowardly, feeble, bootlicking. But the conclusion of the story turns everything upside down: the bequeathing of the violin and the transmigration of the melody turn Rothschild into the heir of the soulful person hidden behind the façade of a crude coffin-maker. "Rothschild's Fiddle" does indeed recall some of the flavor of Hassidic tales, as Bronze himself is reminiscent of the myth of the hidden just man.

The reader is asked to transform Bronze's recurring complaints about "losses" twice: a comic transformation and a tragic one. The comic transformation has to do with the fact that the tongue-tied Bronze always includes on the debit side of his ledger, not just real losses, but also unrealized income.

> After all, it was a real river, not just a little stream. You could go fishing there, sell the fish to merchants, clerks and the buffet manager at the station, and then bank the proceeds. You could sail along it from one estate to another playing the fiddle, and all sorts of people would pay you. You could set up in the barge business again—that was better than coffin-making. Finally, you could raise geese, slaughter them and send them to Moscow in the winter. Probably the down alone would bring in ten roubles a year. But he had let the grass grow under his feet and done none of this. The money he had lost! If you added it all up—fishing, playing the fiddle, keeping barges, slaughtering geese—what a packet he'd have made!

The tragic transformation contains Chekhov's great innovation, in both his stories and his plays: removing the ancient barrier between comedy and tragedy; canceling the strict convention that "low" characters, crude and ignorant types, necessarily belong to the comic realm—at best they are sometimes thrown into pathetic distress—while the tragic dimension is reserved exclusively for the "noble." Only the noble, the enlightened, are able "to take arms against a sea of troubles," to derive from their suffering a comprehensive conclusion about fate, the human condition, the existential absurd, or the hidden flaw in their own character, because of which they were doomed to fall.

Yakov Ivanov, alias Bronze, rises, at the point of his death, to the heights of tragic awareness. Beyond his own pointless life, in his clumsy and ignorant way, he thus sketches the human condition:

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> Life had passed without profit, without pleasure; it had gone by aimlessly, to no purpose. There was nothing to look forward to, and if you looked back, there was a terrible waste of money, enough to make your flesh creep. Why couldn't a man live without all that loss and waste? . . .He concluded that he stood only to profit by dying: he wouldn't have to eat, drink, pay taxes, insult people. Since a man lies in the grave not only for one year, but for hundreds and thousands, the profit would be enormous. . . .This conclusion was correct, of course, but dreadfully unpalatable none the less. Why were things so strangely organized in this world, when you lived only once and had nothing to show for it?

This tragic monologue, which comes, not from the mouth of a hero or a philosopher-prince, but from the mouth of a greedy, narrow-minded, ignorant peasant, casts a totally different light on the opening of the story. The greed and vulgarity are not simply revealed as a thin outer shell, which the reader must remove in order to extract the pearl; greed, vulgarity and pearl are one. It is as if Chekhov cast the undertaker as the tragic Prince of Denmark. The tragic suffering, the tragic consciousness, and the protest against cosmic order come in this story right out of the depth.

Ultimately, where and how does Chekhov plant those unspoken understandings between writer and reader, behind the protagonist's back? We may hear them perhaps in the nocturnal melodies played by the coffin-maker when, trying to sleep in his solitary bed, he would reach for his fiddle. At such moments, Bronze becomes both a Saul tossed by evil spirits and a David, who "would touch the strings, the fiddle would twang in the dark and he would feel better."

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DENIS DONOGHUE

Ireland: Race, Nation, State (Part One)

Perhaps I should say a few autobiographical words to provide a context for anything I think to say later on. I was born in Tullow, one of the minor towns of County Carlow, itself a minor county of the Irish Free State, as it was then constituted. But my home—though I rarely felt entirely at home there—was in Warrenpoint, a town only slightly larger than Tullow, in County Down, just across the border in Northern Ireland. My father was the sergeant-in-charge of the local police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary. We were a Catholic family, living in the police barracks in Warrenpoint: not a comfortable situation in domestic, social, or political terms. My impulses were entirely nationalist, and I regarded the R. U. C. as an alien instrument of occupation; its function was to enforce the status of Northern Ireland, a political entity I deplored. Whatever misgivings my father and mother felt on this issue, they did not discuss them in my presence. Religion and politics were beyond the pale of conversation.

Warrenpoint is a seaside resort on Carlingford Lough, but it is mainly distinctive for having the largest public square in Ireland. For that reason, when I was growing up, it was famous for political marches, Unionist flourishes of power, and Nationalist parades of resentment. Those occasions were equal in one respect, though not ecumenical in any: each party had two days in the year to itself. We had not yet learned to call the summer months the marching season, but the lines of ideological possession were not in dispute. Nationalists started off the season on March 17, St. Patrick's Day. Unionists took over the town on July 12, the anniversary of their victory at the battle of the Boyne in 1690. There were two further occasions. Nationalists who were also Roman Catholics—as nearly all were and are—celebrated the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin on August 15. But they marched to a softer tread on that day than on St. Patrick's Day, since they could hardly claim that the Blessed Virgin was Irish. Finally, on the last Saturday of August, Unionists celebrated

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Editor's note: "Ireland: Race, Nation, State" is an extended version of the 1998 Parnell Memorial Lecture originally delivered at Magdalene College, Cambridge, on March 9. The second half of this article will appear in *Partisan Review*'s Summer 1999 issue.

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Royal Black Preceptory Day, a festival I did not understand. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a preceptory is a local community of Knights Templar. Why they are Royal Black Preceptors, I can't imagine.

I recall from those marching days that the success of an occasion was measured by the number of bands that joined the parade, and the distances the celebrants had travelled by bus or train. Unionists included members of the Orange Order and the Apprentice Boys; they wore black suits and bowler hats, with orange sashes across their chests. The bands featured banner images of King William on his white horse casting King James to the ground. Nationalists had no event to show as dramatic as that one, but their banners in green, white, and orange presented a communal figure of Ireland that supposedly included the mythical Kathleen ni Houlihan as vividly as the historical Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet, and Daniel O'Connell. The lettering on Nationalist banners was Celtic, a notional mark of allegiance to Irish, a language we labored to learn. The music on those marching days consisted of political songs and ballads that could be played to brass, pipe, and drum. On the Unionist side I recall "The Sash My Father Wore," on the Nationalist side "Who Fears to Speak of 'Ninety-Eight'?" and "A Nation Once Again." It seemed a harmless custom, no real injury intended. There were grim faces, steadfast to some undefined purpose, but I did not feel obliged to take them too seriously. The parades seemed picturesque rather than sinister. The political passions on display in Warrenpoint were not as fierce as in other towns and villages in the North—in Harryville, Dunloy, and Drumcree, for instance, as in recent years.

I will put an end to these reminiscences now, because my memory has been shown to be fallible. When I published a memoir called *Warrenpoint* some years ago, I relied on my powers of recall to an extent I soon had cause to regret. Errors of fact are there to embarrass me. So I will not claim that my relation to the appurtenances of the marching days was analytic or otherwise thoughtful. I did not wonder, for instance, as I have wondered recently, when precisely Ireland had been a nation, such that in Thomas Davis's poem of 1842 or thereabouts it must be made "a nation once again":

> When boyhood's fire was in my blood
> I read of ancient freemen
> For Greece and Rome who bravely stood,
> THREE HUNDRED MEN AND THREE MEN.
> And then I prayed I yet might see
> Our fetters rent in twain,
> And Ireland, long a province, be
> A NATION ONCE AGAIN.

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Davis's reference to Greece and Rome evidently recalls the three hundred who died at Thermopylae—the "hot gates"—and the three Romans who kept the Sublician Bridge. I didn't know the references, or stop to learn them, when I committed the song to memory or let it inhabit my mind. I should have wondered why Ireland, to become a nation rather than a province, must exhibit the bravery of Greece and Rome.

In the south of Ireland, so far as I recall, there were no parades of Orange or Green, except for an Orange march every year in Bundoran, County Donegal, for reasons I don't understand. The anthologies read in schools south of the border featured patriotic poems but not marching songs. The most memorable poem in that context was Thomas D'Arcy McGee's "The Celts":

> Long, long ago, beyond the misty space
> Of twice a thousand years,
> In Erin old there dwelt a mighty race,
> Taller than Roman spears;
> Like oaks and towers they had a giant grace,
> Were fleet as deers,
> With wind and wave they made their 'biding place,
> These Western shepherd-seers.

Presumably the Celts were thought to be mighty because epic tradition required them to be.

It is customary to say that Ireland was a nation in the twelfth century, but I don't understand how the conspiracies and struggles for power among the local kings fulfilled the concept of a nation. We read of Diarmait MacMurchadha in conflict with Tighernan Ua Ruairc not only because MacMurchadha abducted Ua Ruairc's wife Dervorgilla but because the province of Meath was to be won or lost. We hear of the High King Ruairi Ua Concobhar in league with Ua Ruairc; of MacMurchadha submitting himself to King Henry II of England to gain his support in recovering his territory; of the bishops giving Henry their allegiance in the expectation that he would reform the Irish church, in the twelfth century a notoriously corrupt institution. Davis's "A Chronology of Ireland" gives the relevant dates without comment, as if they spoke their own truth, as they would if they were accurate. I'll give them so far as they have been corrected:

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1156—Pope Hadrian IV's bull *Laudabiliter* granting Henry II the right to incorporate Ireland in his realms.
1169, May—First Landing of the Normans
1171, October 16—Henry II arrives in Ireland
1172—Synod of Cashel assembled under the authority of Henry II. A council, called by some a parliament, held by Henry II at Lismore.

Davis does not mention the never-to-be-forgotten-or-forgiven Diarmait and Dervorgilla "who brought the Norman in," as the young man on the run from the General Post Office in 1916 keeps reminding us in Yeats's *The Dreaming of the Bones*. However, since 1172, according to Davis and the Young Ireland writers, Ireland has been merely a province.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, it was not universally agreed that Ireland had ever been a nation. Between December 1865 and May 1866, Matthew Arnold gave four lectures at Oxford on the study of Celtic literature in which he argued that the Celts, and specifically the Irish and the Welsh, had for centuries been a race but not a nation. He spoke of "the shrunken and diminished remains of this great primitive race," but only to remark their "failure to reach any material civilisation sound and satisfying, and not out at elbows, poor, slovenly, and half-barbarous." In effect, Arnold claimed that the Celts had never achieved the degree of composition that would issue in a polity. The epigraph he chose for the lectures was a line from Macpherson's *Poems of Ossian*: "They went forth to the war, but they always fell." Taking his bearings from Renan's *Essay on the Poetry of the Celtic Races* and Henri Martin's *France before 1789*, Arnold spoke up for the Celts, but on the clear assumption that they had never become a nation or entered into history. They were a race, recognizable in their spirit or genius, but they had never exceeded that condition. The genius of the Celtic peoples counted for something "in the inward world of thought and science," but for nothing "in the outward and visible world of material life." As late as 1887, Arnold said that the Irish could be "a nation poetically only, not politically."

I use the words "race" and "nation" with the liberty of an amateur. I will assume, in default of an erudite sense of the matter, that a race, as distinct from a nation, is what sociologists call a "social imaginary." Its status is ideal or virtual rather than palpable. It is what people living in the same country—a certain small island in the Atlantic Ocean, say—think of themselves as being: their feeling is primordial rather than historical, social, or economic. In that sense, the Irish race has left traces of itself in poems, sagas, and artifacts, but it has not otherwise entered history. It is what one imagines, on the evidence of archaeological and linguistic remains. But a nation

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is what one projects, on the strength of that imagining. A race is a people-in-waiting, exemplifying the condition of being possible, a long "perhaps." Or it marks what once was, an immemorial folk that has left evidences of itself in legends and landscape but cannot otherwise be produced for inspection. We think of a race as a tribe or breed, descended from putative common ancestors; but we say that it has not—"or not yet"—taken to itself the relatively stable character of a society. Or perhaps it has been ejected from historical or territorial existence, like the Jews in Leopold Bloom's sense of them. I'm referring to the passage in the "Cyclops" chapter of *Ulysses* where John Wyse Nolan asks Bloom: "But do you know what a nation means?" "A nation is the same people living in the same place," Bloom answers. "What is your nation if I may ask?" the Citizen intervenes to say. "Ireland, says Bloom. I was born here. Ireland." After a paragraph of Joyce's linguistic finery, Bloom adverts to another attribute of his inherited life. "And I belong to a race, too. . .that is hated and persecuted. . . .At this very moment. . .sold by auction in Morocco like slaves or cattle." He has drunk too much to allow him to explicate the difference between Jews as a race and Irish men and women as a nation, but his use of the words is acceptable so far as it goes.

Arnold derived his typology of races from scholars of ethnology, linguistics, and the historical study of the Celtic languages. He did not know the languages, so he was indebted to O'Curry, Zeuss, O'Donovan, and other scholars for his access, however limited, to Celtic literature. But he was charmed by the little he knew, and gratified to think of the Celtic languages as distinctive so long as he could take pleasure in their being dead. He referred to "the practical inconvenience of perpetuating the speaking of Welsh" and maintained that "the fusion of all the inhabitants of these islands into one homogeneous, English-speaking whole, the breaking down of barriers between us, the swallowing up of separate provincial nationalities, is a consummation to which the natural course of things irresistibly tends." He did not hesitate, apparently, over the metaphor of "swallowing up." He regarded the genius of the Celtic race as beautiful, but fatally defective in its inability to engage with the real conditions of life. For his main argument, he endorsed a claim of Henri Martin's, that the Celts were "always ready to react against the despotism of fact." They were imaginative, sentimental, vivid, in every respect Nature's children, but they were incapable of acting upon the real world; they lacked the power of composition and therefore the social and political capacity. It followed that the only reasonable thing for "the Celtic members of this empire" to do in 1865 was to bring their nationalist desires to an end and join with English people in creating a better polity in Britain, "a new type, more intelligent, more gracious, and more

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humane." Ireland had no future of its own, but it could help to improve an English society dismally philistine when left to its proclivities. England, in turn, should do everything to attach Ireland to itself. On Ireland's part, there must be no thought of severance.

Arnold's advice met a poor reception. Within two years, the Fenian Rising, despite its being a botched enterprise in every other respect, at least made it clear that the Union of Ireland and England that had come into legal being on January 1, 1801, was still in dispute. Sixteen years after lecturing on the study of Celtic literature, Arnold reported with dismay in an essay called "The Incompatibles" that England had "completely failed to attach Ireland." Worse still: "We find ourselves the object of a glowing, fierce, unexplained hatred on the part of the Irish people." But there must still be no thought of Home Rule or separation. In the spirit of Edmund Burke, Arnold urged that Ireland should be brought "to acquiesce in the English connection by good and just treatment." Specifically: Ireland would be appeased not by better Land Bills but by "the equitable treatment of Catholicism" in regard to schools and universities; and by the development of a society in England that Irish people would find in every respect worth joining.

It may be said: well, Arnold is merely a particular manifestation of prejudice and vivacity. He is not a representative figure in the English relation to Ireland. True, but he was not alone in maintaining that the Irish were a race, not a nation. George Moore said much the same, especially in *A Drama of Muslin* and *Parnell and His Island*. Ireland was "a primitive country and barbarous people." The western Celt, as Moore described him, was "a creature quick to dream, and powerless to execute; in external aspects and in moral history the same tale is told—great things attempted, nothing done." Ireland was interesting so long as you were not invited to take it seriously. In *Hail and Farewell* Moore made fun of Yeats for his dismissal of the social class—the middle class—to which Yeats himself belonged on both sides of his family. In *Autobiographies* Yeats paid him back for this affront and many other indelicacies. Moore's face, he reported, was carved out of a turnip, his body was "insinuating, upflowing, circulative, curvicular, pop-eyed." He was so ill-mannered that "he wrote a long preface to prove that he had a mistress in Mayfair." In *Hail and Farewell* Moore, who knew no Irish, laughed at Douglas Hyde for speaking it—"a torrent of dark, muddied stuff flowed from him, much like the porter which used to come up from Carnacun to be drunk by the peasants on midsummer nights when a bonfire was lighted"—and he gave a farcical account of a pilgrimage he made with George Russell to Slievegullion in honor of Cuchulain and Finn. Moore's irony always preceded the need of it. But the main difference between Moore and Arnold on the question of the Irish

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as a race was that Arnold proposed to rescue them from their civic penury by attaching them to England; Moore tormented them for the grim fun of it. Arnold blamed successive British governments for keeping the Irish in their barbarous condition. Moore sneered at every institution in sight: Gladstone, Parnell, the Catholic Church, the Land League, Irish peasants, the worthies of Dublin Castle. It was as if his rhetoric had only one figure of thought and he meant to keep it employed.

But Moore's irony did not inhibit the work of cultural nationalists. Nor did Joyce's attacks on Yeats and the Irish literary movement. I have in mind "The Holy Office" (1904), "Gas from a Burner" (1912), and the account of political life after Parnell, as Joyce gives it in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room," a story set in Dublin on October 6, 1902. But these are not definitive; they do not tell the whole story of Joyce's relation to Nationalism or even to Yeats and his companions. Joyce was as deeply involved in the values of "kinship, race, and inheritance" as he was committed to those of art and the Europe of Flaubert and Ibsen. There is no reason to think that he is being ironic at Stephen Dedalus's expense when he has him exclaim: "I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race." It is possible to read that declaration ironically, but the irony soon becomes ashamed of itself.

In any event, none of Joyce's interventions, or Moore's, deflected Yeats from his purpose as a cultural nationalist, to summon the Irish race into historical existence as a nation. I do not claim that he accomplished this with his own hands. The work of cultural nationalism began, according to one persuasive account, when the antiquarian Edward Bunting and his assistants transcribed and published the songs played at the great harpists' festival in Belfast in 1792. The early phase of modern Irish nationalism includes preeminently Isaac Butt, Michael Davitt, John O'Leary, and Parnell, and in other respects Hyde and the Gaelic League, Michael Cusack and the Gaelic Athletic Association, Lady Gregory and the Abbey Theater, and many men and women whose purposes did not coincide with Yeats's. Nor was Yeats the first to prepare the ground: he had many precursors, none of them his equal; Davis, Gavan Duffy, Standish O'Grady, Mangan, Ferguson, and Allingham. I acknowledge, too, that Yeats did not express Ireland at every point of its feeling and desire, as references to Maud Gonne, the Countess Markiewicz, Pearse, Connolly, Griffith, and Collins are enough to indicate. But Parnell, Yeats, and Hyde are the major figures in the early years of Irish nationalism. Yeats's main achievement in his early poems, plays, and essays was to bring to composition and form a plethora of national desires that hardly knew themselves to be desires. He told many Irish men and women what they felt, what they wanted, and the more strenuous things they should now want. It was an

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achievement the more remarkable because he spoke from the experience of a social class in decline, the Protestant professional class of parsons and businessmen, and he thought to arouse from their sleep a people mainly Roman Catholic, a type he always disliked and in his later years feared.

The question of nationalism, its origin, and the conditions of its rise, is much in debate. I assume that national sentiment is a feeling of kinship with the other people in one's vicinity rather than with people as such or human beings in general. It is a tendency to think of one's race as analogous to one's family. This does not entail thinking well of them on a particular occasion; it is enough that the analogy with one's family be retained even in disappointment. The national sentiment may also provoke a habit of regarding people outside the circle of kinship as different and perhaps alien. Julia Kristeva has urged people—French people, to begin with—to break this habit by reflecting on "the unconscious" in Freud's description of it. Reflection on the unconscious should instruct us that we are strangers to ourselves. As such, we should find it possible to appreciate the strangeness of other people—the foreigners outside us—"instead of striving to bend them to the norms of our own repression." I suppose, too, that nationalism contains an aspiration to see one's kinship embodied in a nation, a territory, and ultimately a state. We are also being urged these days to think of nationalism in relation to other enabling factors: the printing press, modernization, Romanticism, and the rejection of Enlightenment values. Some scholars of nationalism present it as a discursive formation without any ground in one's actual experience. I find this an implausible argument. At least in Ireland, the nationalist conviction has not begun or ended in words; it has been provoked by issues of land, ownership, tenancy, trade, the famine, and apparently continuous humiliation.

Until instructed otherwise, I am willing to be persuaded by Hans Kohn that the sentiment of nationalism reached its clearest formulation in Rousseau's *Social Contract* with his concept of the "general will." If nationalism is, as Kohn describes it, "the state of mind in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due to the nation-state," it seems reasonable to posit the "general will" as an essential condition of its thriving: it is not the sum of individual wills but the common will, released from every merely accidental desire and turned toward the fellowship of one's kind. In that sense the United States is the first fellowship of people who thought of themselves as bringing a nation into existence. But it is necessary, with Irish Nationalism in view, to add to Rousseau's "general will" Herder's concept of the *Volksgeist,* if only to take account of the emphasis—in Davis, Hyde, Daniel Corkery, and D. P. Moran, to name four otherwise disparate figures—on the Irish language and the valued differences between the cultures of Ireland and England. Herder devoted his work to the idea of nation rather

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than the nation-state, but that, too, was a factor in some Irish nationalists. An uncle of mine, Seamus O'Neill, a rebel before 1916 and for a few years thereafter, once maintained to me that the Irish people suffered far more by the loss of the Irish language than by their subjection to the British Empire.

As a cultural nationalist, Yeats set out to invigorate a sentiment closely resembling Rousseau's "general will." He hoped to do this by invoking a sense of the Irish people as they were expressed primordially in a legendary history, the sagas and lore of a people before the coming of Christianity, myths of "Oisin wandering, Cuchulain killing his son and fighting the sea, Maeve and her children, Baile and Ailinn, Angus and his fellow-immortals."

> I would, if I could, add to that majestic heraldry of the poets, that great and complicated inheritance of images which written literature has substituted for the greater and more complex inheritance of spoken tradition, some new heraldic images, gathered from the lips of the common people. Christianity and the old nature faith have lain down side by side in the cottages, and I would proclaim that peace as loudly as I can among the kingdoms of poetry, where there is no peace that is not joyous, no battle that does not give life instead of death; I may even try to persuade others, in more sober prose, that there can be no language more worthy of poetry, and of the meditation of the soul than that which has been made, or can be made, out of a subtlety of desire, an emotion of sacrifice, a delight in order, that are perhaps Christian, and myths and images that mirror the energies of woods and streams, and of their wild creatures.

If myth is, as Marcel Etienne has described it, "an autonomous discourse extracting from reality the elements over which it maintains sovereignty," it corresponds to a selected communal experience, as desire would have it, free from the despotism of fact. The three major cycles—the mythological cycle, the Red Branch cycle, and the cycle of the Fianna—gave Yeats enough motifs for any of his purposes in poetry, fiction, and drama. He could use those sagas to appeal to unity of race as a force prior to historical divisions. They allowed him to say, and to urge others to say: I am of Ireland. Several years after the country was partitioned, Yeats maintained that "Ireland, divided in religion and politics, is as much one race as any modern country." But he did not maintain a strict distinction between race and nation. The word "race" occurred to him when he scanned the far horizon of myth and legend, and when he consulted the evidence drawn from Celtic anthropology, folklore, and archaeology. In "J. M. Synge and the Ireland of his Time" he claimed that Synge "sought for the race,

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not through the eyes or in history, or even in the future, but where the monks found God, in the depths of the mind." The word "nation" occurred to Yeats when he thought of a people being impelled toward self-expression and self-transformation. In the same essay he spoke of the nation as "a dumb struggling thought seeking a mouth to utter it or hand to show it, a teeming delight that would re-create the world." The poet was its representative voice, the bard.

Yeats's first authority for these motifs was Standish O'Grady's *History of Ireland*, especially its first volume, *The Heroic Period* (1878). The second volume, *Cuculain and his Contemporaries* (1880), was more easily superseded in later years by the stories Lady Gregory assembled in her *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* and *Gods and Fighting Men*. Although Yeats protested that he wanted to see pagan Ireland and Christian Ireland lying down together in peace, it was crucial to him that he could divine the unity of the Irish race, to begin with, mainly in pagan terms. In the debate between Oisin and Patrick, Oisin should have the deeper experience and the better lines. Christianity must be made to appear a fine enough thing in its way, though Yeats did not emphasize the monastic and the missionary traditions as Joyce did, especially in his lectures in Trieste in 1907. Nor did he speculate on linguistic relations between Phoenicia, Crete, Greece, Egypt, and Ireland, as Joyce did when his mind was on *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. It was rhetorically compelling for Yeats to present early Irish Christianity as a much reduced system of belief and practice, by comparison with the heroic values of the legendary, pagan Ireland it displaced.

When it came to a further choice, after the Reformation, Protestantism was a more agreeable form of life, in Yeats's view, than Catholicism even if its theology was undemanding. He was often bitter, as O'Grady was, when he pondered the declined social status of Protestants in nineteenth-century Ireland. In several essays and two or three poems Yeats maintained that a distinctively Irish form of Nationalism had been promulgated by Molyneux, Swift, and especially by Berkeley; that it animated the otherwise diverse lives of Burke, Goldsmith, Grattan, Wolfe Tone, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Robert Emmet, Davis, and Mitchel; and that it culminated in Parnell. It was a Protestant achievement, but Yeats liked to think of it as still at one with heroic, pagan, antinomian impulses. A primitive form of it was expressed in Gavan Duffy's and Davis's work for the Young Ireland movement, but Yeats knew that he must refine upon the spirit of the nation by submitting its patriotic zeal to a much wider and more imaginative range of considerations. That was his justification for claiming, in "To Ireland in the Coming Times," that his rhymes, more than those of Davis, Mangan, and Ferguson, told "Of things discovered in the deep, / Where only

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body's laid asleep." He respected Davis, but he thought that the Young Ireland movement had encouraged Irish people to settle for facile sentiments and vulgar arguments:

> Young Ireland had taught a study of our history with the glory of Ireland for event; and this, for. . .lack of comparison with that of other countries, wrecked the historical instinct. The man who doubted, let us say, our fabulous ancient kings running up to Adam, or found but mythology in some old tale, was hated as if he had doubted the authority of Scripture. Above all, no man was so ignorant that he had not by rote familiar arguments and statistics to drive away amid familiar applause all those that had found strange truth in the world or in their minds, and all whose knowledge had passed out of memory and become an instinct of hand or eye. There was no literature, for literature is a child of experience always, of knowledge never. . . .

In "To Ireland in the Coming Times" Yeats included himself in the kinship of Protestant nationalists, and in other poems he took up in cultural terms the work that Parnell had tried to do in political terms. The sentiment he proclaimed was Parnell's, a Protestant conviction, different in kind from the Catholic impulse of O'Connell, a man Yeats affected to despise and impugn as the great comedian. O'Connell was a populist. Parnell was a tragic hero, lonely, subjective, antithetical: he was an ambiguous, equivocal force, maintaining his personality as a secret, his demon. He spoke in whatever voice he chose and on his own sole authority.

Yeats's strategy was culturally emphatic. Parnell regularly invoked "the Irish nation" and "the Irish race" which he proposed to lead, but, as F. S. L. Lyons has noted, he seems never to have asked himself what he meant by those phrases, "and the idea that Ireland might possibly contain two nations, not one, apparently never entered his head." Yeats emphasized Unity of Race, at least to begin with; divisions would be recognized later and with regret. It is regularly maintained that he posited for the Irish people a fixed identity, as if such a quality were independent of circumstances and forces. I don't think he did. His reflections on race, type, and national character seem to me not at all essentialist. He always allows for mobility by making every postulate yield to the transforming power of one's imagination. He submits the ostensibly fixed concepts of nature, history, character, self, and origin to subjective transformation, such that they become forms of freedom, gesture, personality, and style. Irish identity is what he wants to create, by many acts of summoning and conjuring; it is not deemed to be already there in a fixed form. Yeats's motive was

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Nietzschean long before he had read Nietzsche. In "The Use and Abuse of History" Nietzsche says that we seek a past from which we may spring, rather than that past from which we appear to have derived.

This explains why Yeats's typical attention to a concept or a value displaces it and compels it to take part in the action of his own imagination. In "A General Introduction for My Work" he says that a poet "is never the bundle of accident and incoherence that sits down to breakfast; he has been reborn as an idea, something intended, complete." Evidently, the particular idea is his own:

> A novelist might describe his accidence, his incoherence, he must not; he is more type than man, more passion than type. He is Lear, Romeo, Oedipus, Tiresias; he has stepped out of a play, and even the woman he loves is Rosalind, Cleopatra, never The Dark Lady. He is part of his own phantasmagoria and we adore him because nature has grown intelligible, and by so doing a part of our creative power.

Similarly, Yeats was not willing to see history as mere chronology, "the cracked tune that Chronos sings." He insisted on submitting it to the force of one's imagination. In his diary of 1930 he wrote, "History is necessity until it takes fire in someone's head and becomes freedom or virtue." In "The Celtic Element in Literature," as if he were ready to exchange life for art, he wrote:

> Certainly a thirst for unbounded emotion and a wild melancholy are troublesome things in the world, and do not make its life more easy or orderly, but it may be the arts are founded on the life beyond the world, and that they must cry in the ears of our penury until the world has been consumed and become a vision.

The problem was not how to consume the world but how to make this apparently opaque thing appear to be transfigured, become transparent by virtue of one's imagination.

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NATHAN G. HALE, JR.

Freud's Critics: A Critical Look

As an historian, I have been reading the burgeoning literature of the Freud wars, a field of vituperative contention, with fascination and dismay—the passions and follies of both sides. On the one hand, there is the pained indignation of such Freudian loyalists as Kurt Eissler; on the other the elegant diatribes of the literary critic Frederick Crews, who hopes to purge America of the scourge of psychoanalysis. Revisionists fear the black hand of the Freud "establishment" presumably attempting to suppress their legitimate scholarship. The Freudians fear the distorted onslaughts of a motley crew of unqualified critics. Where in all this is a sense of perspective and judicious judgment of what remains a towering historical figure and a serious profession? In fact, how good is the research of Freud's critics and how sound are their judgments?

The current devaluation of Freud obviously was inspired by the official idealizations that began with Ernest Jones, who saw him as the carrier of a new dispensation. But that is not the whole story. Jones had a streak of what might be termed ambivalence or objectivity, depending on one's preference. Some of Freud's intimates who read his book in manuscript did not perceive Jones as a sycophant. Indeed, he was seen as subversively critical and we owe to him the first full glimpses of Freud's own neurotic difficulties, his superstitions about death, and his skeptical fascination with the occult and with thought transference, as well as his troubled relationship with Wilhelm Fliess, a Berlin physician and early confidant. In this respect, Jones was the first of Freud's biographical critics, although for him Freud remained a hero and a major figure in Western scientific thought. This was not a universal opinion, and controversy is part of the history of psychoanalysis.

Freud's psychoanalysis has been under attack almost from its inception. Many of our current critics are merely repeating strictures raised almost a hundred years ago, particularly regarding suggestion. At the same time some of the grounds of opposition have shifted like a kaleidoscope. Before World War I, American conservatives saw psychoanalysis as morally subversive. American communists in the 1920s denounced it as a sick conventional bourgeois ideology. Through the 1950s, prominent American Catholics judged it to be godless and amoral. In this vein, the literary critic John Farrell now insists that Freud's paranoid disposition reinforced a modern culture of suspicion that besmirches all tradition and nobility with dirty explanations. But the English critic Richard Webster argues that Freud

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merely restated the tired and totally unscientific Judeo-Christian tradition, especially as it relates to sexuality.

Current Freud-bashers have advanced four major criticisms: first, that Freud was no scientist and never devised a reliable way to test or prove his conclusions; second, that he lacked personal integrity and fudged his data to fit his theories; third, that he was a poor, inconsistent theorist; fourth, that he established a cult, not an empirical discipline. Some critics deal primarily with one of these allegations; others, such as Frederick Crews, deal with all of them in a more helter-skelter fashion.

Crews portrays psychoanalysis as a malevolent force culminating in the cult of recovered memories that has jailed dozens of innocent men and women for child molestation, a misfortune he attributes to Freud's malign influence. He insists above all on the utter unreliability, the farcical pretensions of Freud and his disciples, who have foisted a pseudoscience on gullible Americans.

Crews admittedly depends primarily on the historical research of others, such as Allen Esterson, Peter Swales, Malcolm Macmillan, Patrick Mahony, and Frank Sulloway. But how fair to the subject are these critics? How scrupulously is the surviving evidence examined? In short, how good is the historical research and how reasonable the conclusions?

First, the gains from the new investigations of Freud have been enormous. Beginning with Henri Ellenberger, Frank Sulloway, Hannah Decker, Carl Schorsky, Paul Roazen, Albrecht Hirschmueller, Peter Swales, and others, Freud has been placed more closely in the context of his European contemporaries and predecessors. For example, Sulloway's exploration of the biological assumptions that underpinned much of Freud's work has helped to solve some serious puzzles. His discussion of the death instinct is, I think, brilliant, and so too is his elucidation of the Freud legend, the movement's idealization of the master.

Malcolm Macmillan, an Australian academic psychologist, has done us a service by suggesting that the source of Freud's assumption that contiguous associations revealed causality came from Freud's teacher, the psychiatrist Theodor Meynert, and from the English neurologist, Hughlings Jackson. And he has emphasized Freud's reliance on Charcot's theory of traumatic hysteria mated with Koch's bacillus theory of disease. But I do not believe that Macmillan is fair to Freud's views of evidence and confirmation, and there are serious problems even with his attributions to Meynert. Peter Swales has done extraordinary research in identifying Freud's first patients and acquaintances and their survivors who have preserved their own legends of what went on in the consulting room and elsewhere. He has also argued persuasively that Freud's rejection of his own seduction theory owed much to Krafft-Ebing, and his reading

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of Johann Weier's sixteenth-century study of witchcraft in which witches' confessions were attributed to their questioners' suggestions.

But recent historical research about Freud is not uniformly hostile. Sympathetic scholars such as Peter Gay, Hannah Decker, Ilse Grubrich-Simitis, and Albrecht Hirschmueller have made vital and original contributions to our knowledge of Freud. But I am highly skeptical about the global judgments of the most hostile revisionists. There are distortions of text, omissions of crucial passages, wrong historical judgments, and from time to time a malicious tone. When I read some of the critics and then read Freud's case histories, I find myself in an Alice-in-Wonderland world where the criticism and the text never quite seem to connect. One must recall that Freud's first patients are long dead, that there are no surviving case notes, and that we are left with the hearsay recollections of their descendants. Moreover, in the current preoccupation with Freud's rhetoric, the logical arguments he advanced are often ignored. Finally, with notable exceptions, critics concentrate on what Ian Hacking has called the "Kindergarten Freud," the Freud of the early years when he was feeling his way and moving from the cathartic method to psychoanalysis.

Let us examine more closely several examples of the work of the new critics, beginning with the British private scholar, Peter Swales, on Freud's Katharina, the hysterical girl on the mountaintop whom Freud treated in a few brief conversations. Swales's sleuthing in identifying Katharina and her family is wonderful, clearly the result of patience, doggedness, and sense. But there are serious difficulties with his interpretations of his discovery. Swales makes two major criticisms: that Freud misdiagnosed the nature of Katharina's problems, and that he suggested much of what she had to say.

First, the misdiagnosis: Freud believed that her symptoms resulted from a delayed reaction to witnessing her father having sexual intercourse with her cousin. Swales argues that it was an "existential crisis" rather than an "aversionary reaction." But he never defines the existential crisis. Freud argued that Katharina's realization that her father had attempted incest constituted a severe trauma and underlay her hysterical symptoms, a perfectly reasonable conclusion of Freud's.

Secondly, just how much suggestion was there on Freud's part? We have only his case history to go by. Here is what the text says:

> Freud: Why were you so frightened when you found them together? Did you understand it? Did you know what was going on?
>
> Katharina: Oh, no. I didn't understand anything at the time. I was only sixteen. I don't know what I was frightened about.

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> Freud: If you could remember what was happening to you when you had your first attack, it would help you. [Her hysterical attacks were accompanied by a vision of a frightening head.] Could the head be Franziska's? [the cousin's name]
>
> Katharina: No, it's a man's head.
>
> Freud: Perhaps your uncle's? [Freud had disguised Katharina's father as her uncle in his first text.] [And here is the first real suggestion:] If you were sick three days later, I believe that means that when you looked into the room you felt disgusted.
>
> Katharina: Yes, I am sure I felt disgusted. . .but at what. . . .

This reply was followed immediately by scenes of the family quarrels, the father's anger at Katharina, and her parents' divorce. Then, to Freud's apparent astonishment, she told of her father's sexual advances when she was much younger. She was not disgusted by the sight of the coitus but by the memory of the sexual advances whose full significance then became clear.

I would suggest that Freud's narrative is far more convincing than the notion of an existential trauma of an unspecified nature. Freud's emphasis on the family quarrel, her parents' divorce, and her father's anger leads her to identify the unknown head she hallucinates. Finally she recognizes that the frightening face was her father's, frightening because of his rage at her for revealing his lapse.

Swales omits in his discussion a crucial part of Freud's text turning the passage into an example of suggestion:

> Katharina: Oh, if only I knew what it was I felt disgusted at.
>
> Freud: "I had no idea either. But I told her to go on and tell me whatever occurred to her, in the confident expectation that she would think of precisely what I needed to explain the case."

And the memories she came up with were her father's earlier attempts at intimacy.

What Freud interpolated is clear: not the scene at the window, not the earlier abuse. These she supplied. What Freud suggested was her disgust and the full realization of the sexual nature of her father's advances, including

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the sensation of his erect penis. Freud goes on to add that she seemed by her behavior to confirm this second surmise.

What are we to make of Swales's assertion that "the edifice of Freudian theory rests upon a simple fallacy—the fallacy that drugs are 'innately sexual' "? According to Swales, Freud claimed an organic basis for psychoanalysis as ultimately providing the objective evidence for his elaborate theoretical assertions. Swales's conclusion is based on the assertion that Freud invested cocaine "with a primarily sexual significance," and that cocaine served as his obsessive model for libido. I find little evidence to support this curious interpretation. Freud did indeed write that the neuroses resembled the phenomena of "intoxication and abstinence," and that sexuality was both a biological and a psychological function, and cited as well the example of Graves' disease. But this hardly supports the assertion that Freud saw cocaine as primarily sexual. From the very pages in Ernest Jones that Swales cites as support, we learn that Freud had a rather broader view of the uses of cocaine: it made him cheerful; gave him the feeling of having dined well; cured a case of "gastric catarrh"; cured Freud's bouts of depression, anxiety attacks and indigestion; and increased his self-control, vitality, and capacity for work. Here he advances startling claims, but the note fails to support the argument and there are other footnote problems with Swales's paper. Elsewhere, Swales suggests that Freud might have wished to murder Fliess because of a flap over priorities for the theory of bisexuality, an allegation based solely on the recollections of Fliess's descendants. In that essay, Swales also argues that Freud "neglected, however, to seriously enquire whether there may have been any truth—past or present—underlying Schreber's delusions of persecution in favor of promoting his own theories of repressed wishful fantasies and defense." This gives the impression that Freud made no attempt to investigate the factors that might have operated in Schreber's early life. But in fact, Freud wrote to a colleague near Schreber's home for information about Schreber's family, particularly his father, a famous educational reformer, and his brother. Indeed, much of Freud's speculation hinges on the nature of the father-son relationship. Does Swales mention this concern? Not at all.

Malcolm Macmillan hauls up a 687-page academic cannon to shoot the hundred-year-old psychoanalytic elephant, but succeeds in barely wounding what he construes as Freud's theory and therapy. He relies heavily on the systematic criticism of psychoanalysts themselves, which negates much of his critical stance. For if Freud had founded a cult rather than an empirical discipline, it is unlikely that his propositions and methods would have been criticized and replaced by other psychoanalysts. Indeed, if Freud's theories, now close to a hundred years old, had not been

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superseded and his observations checked or questioned, it would be a major intellectual scandal.

Macmillan ignores crucial elements of Freud's theories as he advanced them, occasionally distorts the early case histories, quotes selectively, and pronounces ahistorical judgments. He argues that Breuer's first notes on the case of Anna O. did not discuss the discharge of emotions as a central aspect of recovering painful memories, and therefore the removal of symptoms could not have occurred by catharsis, a concept Breuer added later. The fact that he did not specifically mention the discharge of emotion in his twenty-one-and-a-half-page case notes in 1882 is not evidence that it did not occur. And indeed the case notes discuss the relief she experienced after describing her symptoms, as historian Henri Ellenberger pointed out. Is it likely that Breuer's patient recounted experiences of fear, disgust, anger, etc., without any of the concomitant emotions, and that this bloodless recital was somehow curative? Indeed, as Decker states, so accepted was the need for the expression of emotion that no German physician disputed Freud's argument that emotion had to be discharged to prevent "psychopathological states."

For an example of selective omission, Macmillan's account of Elizabeth von R., one of Freud's first patients, ignores entirely the crucial climax of the case: that she realized at her sister's death that she was in love with her brother-in-law and that this realization was related to some of her symptoms. Here Macmillan ignores Freud's central concept of conflict—the moral conflict between shame and desire.

When Macmillan notes that Freud failed to confirm his theories of dream interpretation with a philosopher friend, Heinrich Gompertz, whose dreams Freud could not analyze, he again gives a truncated quotation: "The experiment proved a complete failure." But in the same letter, Gompertz also wrote, "I am nevertheless convinced that many of the psychic mechanisms discovered by him really play a remarkable part in our lives and in a few cases I have myself been able to effect surprising 'cures' by using some of his methods."

Macmillan also argues that Freud was unaware of the possible unconscious action of suggestion from therapist to patient. But Freud was acutely aware of it, since he discusses it at length in his early essays on hypnotism, along with the authoritative position of the therapist and the compliance of the patient, and the patient's unconscious emotional involvement with the therapist.

Freud called it transference, and later briefly expanded it to the concept of counter-transference, the therapist's emotional reaction to the patient. These concepts are the very heart of suggestive influence and psychoanalytic therapy. In fact, psychoanalysis was the only contemporary

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therapy that systematically attempted to explain suggestion on a psychological basis, except perhaps for vague French theories of emotional contagion. In fact, psychoanalysis marked an historic break with the authoritative suggestive techniques then current in other psychotherapies—by, for instance, Janet, Dejerine, Dubois, Krafft-Ebing, or Albert Moll. Freud's other therapeutic innovation along with free association was the unprecedented amount of time he spent with a single patient.

Freud argued, as Macmillan notes but dismisses, that the patient's own resistance to interpretations was a partial guarantee that false interpretations would be hard to foist on the unwilling patient. Finally, Macmillan's implication that the therapist determines the course of therapy, including the patient's associations, is contradicted by his own argument that Breuer's patient Anna O. invented her own cathartic treatment, following then-fashionable discussions of catharsis in medical and literary theory. It ignores as well Ellenberger's argument that patients have often determined the nature of both theory and treatment, and the suggestion by others that differing theories may in fact reflect different patient populations and that these may provide the basis for therapists' varying hypotheses.

Macmillan also insists that Freud should have collected and examined a sample of non-neurotics to test his theories of the sexual origin of neuroses. Did the same sexual experiences uniformly create the same neuroses? Were sexual *noxae* also present in non-neurotics? Macmillan contends that, instead of conducting such a study, Freud contented himself with anecdotal evidence from his circle of acquaintances. However, it is likely that Freud inspired his pupil Felix Gattel to review one hundred consecutive cases of neurasthenia and actual neuroses at Krafft-Ebing's clinic. Gattel found a high percentage of sexual factors and, indeed, he found cases of hysteria among these cases with the sexual etiology consisting not in seduction by the father, but in sex play with other children.

Still, how many of Freud's contemporaries in neurology and psychiatry did systematic surveys to test their hypotheses? It seems to me that observation and positive instances, i.e., illustrative case history collection and classification, were the usual ways of creating and supporting theories, precisely the route Freud took.

None of Freud's own caution about his theoretical structure, that it was tentative, that it could be amended or discarded, appears in this lengthy tome. It assumes that Freud proposed a definitive system, subject to all the rigors of logical analysis. Macmillan, as analysts often have done before him, painfully teases out the inconsistencies in Freud's theories. And he argues that Freud never really altered the erroneous bases of his early work, and that these errors persisted in all his later theoretical modifications. These mistakes were based on false physiological assumptions, such

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as the constancy principle, that were never given up. But Freud's theories became far more complex and flexible than the simple physiologically-based assumptions of his early years.

Macmillan's own philosophy of science seems remarkably limited. Indeed, he ignores the objections of some philosophers to a narrowly positivist position on psychoanalysis, as well as philosophers and psychoanalysts who have attempted to provide a logical basis for psychoanalytic observations. Indeed, philosophers of science do not agree among themselves as to what is scientific, if they ever did. For example, Paul Feyerabend in *Against Method* has asserted that one could not capture the essence of science or prescribe the conditions of its emergence. And Ian Hacking has demonstrated how the use of accepted statistical techniques can construct the reality of a condition such as multiple personality, simply because the basic questionnaires were developed by people who believed in the syndrome and in all sincerity asked questions that would elicit germane responses. Moreover, Hacking would argue that there are multiple models of science, including several of the procedures Freud and his contemporaries employed, such as "postulation and deduction," model construction, comparison and taxonomy, and tracing genetic development.

Macmillan argues that Freud credulously accepted his teacher Theodor Meynert's view "of an identity between an association, a logical relation and a causal connection," and that a gap in an association would reveal a cause. But is this truly the case? In fact, Macmillan cites Meynert out of context. Meynert was explaining how inference originated in the association of one sensory impression with another, i.e., that a lamb could be recognized by its bleat and that this kind of inference led to the conception of causality, an epistemological issue. But inference in this sense and cause are hardly equivalent, nor did Meynert intend them to be so construed. Moreover, nowhere in *Studies in Hysteria* do Breuer and Freud cite Meynert in support of their presumed view that a gap in a chain of associations reveals a cause. It looks as if Macmillan simply found what he took to be an explanatory passage, removed it from context, and applied it arbitrarily. Furthermore, did Freud truly believe that an associative gap revealed a cause? Freud merely asserted that through associations to a dream one could find its "origin, the circle of thoughts and interests from which it sprang." And these were clearly multiple and not some simple "cause."

Thus, a gap suggested the existence of unknown factors in the patient's life, factors that exploration along the lines of converging associations could reveal. It is up to Macmillan and the philosopher Adolf Gruenbaum, as well, to demonstrate the truth of their assertions, i.e., that associations do not in fact lead to the discovery of conditions that underlie dreams or symptoms. This proposition could be confirmed or denied by examining

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transcripts of psychoanalytic sessions in which free association was used, which, as far as I can determine, they fail to do. Finally, Macmillan seems to assume that the analyst gives the patient a topic about which he must collect associations; but this is the very opposite of Freud's procedure, since he carefully explained to the patient that he was to say whatever came to mind. He let his patient's associations take their own course, which he regarded as essential to the work of analysis.

Freud appealed to far more than clinical evidence or evidence from successful treatment to support his hypotheses. He was far from being a therapeutic enthusiast, although some of his papers into the 1920s expressed considerable confidence in the therapeutic success of psychoanalysis. Toward the end of his life his therapeutic pessimism grew markedly. Surely Paul Robinson is right to argue that Adolf Gruenbaum exaggerated the importance Freud placed on the "tally argument," i.e., that therapeutic success proved the validity of clinical interpretations and of psychoanalysis in general.

Freud appealed to wide varieties of evidence for his theories, some of which would hardly be considered corroboration today. He collected what he took to be supporting data from literature, religion, contemporary anthropology and social psychology, from dreams and slips, the "psychopathology of everyday life," even from the direct observation of children. He cited the psychological experiments of Viennese disciples corroborating his theories of distortion and symbolism. He once even expressed the wish that Otto Rank had compiled "statistical data comparing the mentality of first-born children, those who had especially difficult births and those born by means of Caesarian section," before publishing his birth trauma theory.

Freud's grounds for confirming causal hypotheses seem to have been the overall fit of converging pieces of evidence. As Robinson has suggested, psychoanalysis is a hybrid, operating between science and the humanities, but not identical with either. But this does not mean that psychoanalytic hypotheses cannot be confirmed or falsified. It means simply that physics as a model science for psychoanalysis may be entirely inappropriate and that, as Ernst Mayr holds, biology or the social sciences may come closer.

And how many social scientists agree on the "truth" of their theories? The disagreements among economists and psychologists about fundamental theory are notorious.

Finally, Macmillan ignores many important developments in modern psychoanalysis, including the clinical and some of the experimental literature. He makes much of the disagreements among psychoanalysts about both theory and clinical practice and interpretation. These surely are rife

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today. But much of his evidence refers not to work with living patients, but to interpretations of patients, such as Dora, long dead and hardly able to provide confirmation or denial of rival interpretations. In concluding that "the psychoanalytic method is not capable of discovering clinical facts that can be agreed upon," Macmillan ignores current empirical evidence in support of psychoanalysis (see below).

Another of Freud's critics is Allen Esterson, a British mathematician whom Crews cites at length. Esterson raises two points: the outcome of Freud's treatment and the reception of his work by contemporaries. He makes much of Freud's rejection of the seduction theory and his presumably false claims of therapeutic success.

Freud indeed claimed therapeutic success for his new method, particularly in the 1896 paper, yet complained to Fliess of not being able to "bring a single analysis to a real conclusion" in 1897. The question is, what does the latter phrase mean? I submit that in the context of the rejection of the seduction theory it did not mean there had been no therapeutic success, no remission of symptoms with the new method of psychoanalysis and association, but rather that Freud could not be sure his patients had recovered the memories of infantile trauma he had posited. Earlier letters to Fliess contain patients' recollections of traumata in early childhood, along with seemingly convincing details involving nursemaids, fathers, and brothers. Moreover, there had been partial successes, but at this juncture Freud did not know to what to attribute them, except to traditional explanations, by which he probably meant suggestive techniques. In two instances out of eighteen cases there was outside corroboration for the sexual traumata.

When Freud abandoned his neurotica, he obviously was making a distinction between true memories and fantasies of abuse, for which he should be congratulated. His skepticism would indeed be strengthened, I think, by the astonishing memories of elaborate Satanic abuse coaxed from children in our own day. Freud noted dryly to Fliess that "one cannot distinguish between truth and fiction that has been cathected with affect," i.e., that one cannot judge whether the scenes his patients reproduced were true or not, even though they were recounted with emotion. And there is the dawning realization that many of them might be fantasies.

It seems to me that the tenor of the Fliess letters suggests tentative exploration, false starts, self-corrections, and considerable awareness of the problem of evidence in the material Freud is pursuing. To argue as does Macmillan that Freud suggested some of the early traumas is, I think, conceivable, and in one instance Freud did indeed suggest to a patient that she had been orally traumatized by her father. I suspect Freud told his patients to expect to recall traumatic scenes. But I doubt if their specific content was prescribed by him. On the other hand, Freud later admitted

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that his cases had been scanty and yet he had generalized with apparent confidence on their basis. This tendency to over-generalization seems to be a persistent characteristic, as Russell A. Powell and Douglas P. Boer, and Racle P. Blass and Bennett Simon maintain. In 1905 Freud clearly corrected his earlier view: early sexual experience such as seduction was not *per se* responsible for neuroses, but rather they were the reaction to that experience. But he never entirely abandoned the etiological significance of seduction and early trauma and reiterated their importance toward the end of his life in *Moses and Monotheism*, although the Oedipus complex and stages of psychosexual development became far more important.

What can we conclude about Freud's first accounts of his patients? What is reasonable? I think we can conclude as he did that he ran across a larger-than-usual number of cases in which there had been abuse in childhood—at what precise age is unclear—and that some of these patients produced what seemed to be veridical memories of such abuse in their very early years. Let me add parenthetically that Freud assumed the period of childhood was important, an argument his critics seem to have missed. He outlined the following reasons, perhaps derived from contemporary biology: "Injuries sustained by an organ which is as yet immature or by a function which is in process of developing, often cause more severe and lasting effects than they could do in more mature years." The argument that not just heredity but also environmental traumata are the major causes of neurosis is part of Freud's developing idea, which is shared by various contemporary researchers.

To regard Freud's case histories as uniform failures is misleading. The Wolf Man, for instance, whose truly florid symptoms and profound neuroticism had been treated unsuccessfully by some of Freud's most prestigious contemporaries, temporarily was cured of his constipation, which later returned. Also, most critics overlook that, as a refugee from the Russian Revolution after the Great War, he found himself penniless and without skills in a foreign country. Earlier, after his treatment with Freud, he had earned a law degree, married, and later worked in an insurance office in Vienna for thirty years. He did undergo periods of treatment with other analysts. But could his later level of functioning have been predicted of the spoiled, neurotic invalid who first came to Freud, an invalid with a retinue who, if psychoanalytic accounts are to be credited, could not even dress himself? The Rat Man, the subject of Freud's other extensive case history, enjoyed a remission of symptoms as a result of his treatment until his death in World War I.

To regard all Freud's claims and changes of view as proof of chicanery and dishonesty rather than enthusiasm, lack of caution, ambition, possibly overweening, and an honest search for explanation seems to me to be proof of the biased intent of the critic.

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Now, not only Freud, but also his first co-author, Josef Breuer, have been accused of disingenuous distortion by Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, a French professor of comparative literature. He argues in *Souvenirs d'Anna O.* that Breuer and Freud lied when they reported that Anna O., the archetypal patient of the cathartic method, had been successfully treated. Because her treatment was in fact a failure, all talk therapy is therefore invalid. Each later instance of its application is merely the useless repetition of a false model, an archetypal myth. Breuer omitted from the report he published with Freud the fact that his patient suffered a serious relapse that required her hospitalization in a private sanitarium. Moreover, the failure of Anna O.'s treatment was a carefully guarded secret of the psychoanalytic movement.

How accurate is this claim of lying and secrecy?

Were the failure a closely guarded secret of the psychoanalytic movement, why would Ernest Jones reveal it in his biography of Freud and even identify the patient? Did Breuer and Freud in fact claim she was cured? Both authors insisted that their treatment was not "causative," i.e., did not affect the causes of illness. Both insisted that her "symptoms" cleared up when she described under hypnosis the emotional circumstances of their first appearance. Breuer noted at the end of the case that after his treatment she suffered a temporary depression and that it was some years before she "regained her mental balance entirely." Does this guarded conclusion constitute a claim of "cure"? Freud's own version of the case seemed to become increasingly sanguine in the Clark Lectures in 1909, where he claimed that no one had ever before cured an "hysterical symptom" by catharsis. Then, in 1925, he wrote more expansively that Breuer had relieved his patient of "all her symptoms," surely suggestive of a more complete remission. Here Freud was clearly embellishing the story around the time he was writing Breuer's obituary. Had his memory slipped? Was it deliberate obfuscation? Was it exaggerated praise of Breuer? It is impossible to know.

Why, at the time, did Breuer not describe her relapse? He had begun to treat the case when his patient was twenty-one years old in 1880. He published the case thirteen years later when she was thirty-four and entering on a career as director of a Jewish orphanage and an advocate of women's rights. Her family and probably her identity as a patient were well known in Vienna. I would argue that consideration for her budding career and her family prevented Breuer from being entirely candid. Indeed, Freud mentioned the problem of "medical discretion" in his obituary of Breuer. Anna O. herself destroyed all personal records of her illness as if it had been a shameful episode.

Instead of the traditional "talking cure," Borch-Jacobsen would have us believe that Anna O. was acting a role of which she was quite conscious

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and that she and Breuer together constructed a kind of hypnotic theater of illness and cure. Indeed, Anna O. was merely reproducing all the hypnotic phenomena she had learned about when a famous hypnotist gave a series of sensational demonstrations in Vienna in 1880, the year she fell ill. Borch-Jacobsen supports his argument for the conscious awareness of the hypnotized subject by citing Ernest Hilgard, the Stanford researcher in hypnosis. In fact, however, Hilgard discovered that in less than half of his sample of hypnotized subjects a functioning "observer" could be elicited who knew exactly what happened while under hypnosis. Freud knew of this phenomenon. Moreover, the observer phenomenon did not occur in states of deep hypnosis. Hilgard's observation bears little relation to Borch-Jacobsen's description of Anna O.'s histrionic and theatrical displays. Finally, one patient came to Hilgard after suffering from a paralysis of the arm that had persisted for years, and this kind of paralysis, of course, was precisely one of Anna O.'s symptoms, which Borch-Jacobsen believes had been simulated.

Borch-Jacobsen interprets Anna O.'s illness as in part a protest against her limited and puritanical upbringing, a judgment with which Freud and Breuer probably would have agreed. But he makes nothing at all of what Breuer regarded as crucial to her case: her erotic attachment to her father, her nursing of her father at night during his prolonged and fatal illness from complications of the tuberculosis which also had killed her sister. He trivializes her complaints, downplays her suicide threats. He makes nothing of the fact that some of her symptomatic behavior occurred when she was forbidden to nurse her father because of her own nervous condition, that the news of his death was kept from her by her mother for a period of time. These charged emotional issues are scarcely dealt with at all, but some of them are at the heart of Breuer's and Freud's recounting of the case.

Finally, the author presents us with a credulous Breuer, playing along with his histrionic patient. Yet Breuer's cautious German biographer, Albrecht Hirschmueller, professor of medical history at the University of Tübingen, noted that Breuer had a sophisticated knowledge of the dangers of hypnosis and suggestion. Breuer was careful to state that he thought his patient was independent and critically minded, not easily suggestible, and that some of her statements had been corroborated by others in her household and by a diary that her mother had kept.

When she said she had simulated all her symptoms he countered that precisely that kind of denial was common among hysterical patients. Were all their complaints simulated as Borch-Jacobsen would insist? Or were they genuine? It is probably a question the historian cannot answer. But Breuer was no fool and he believed them to be genuine and spontaneous.

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Borch-Jacobsen offers little that is new. The failure of Anna O.'s treatment was established by Henri Ellenberger (1970) and by Hirschmueller (1978), and Borch-Jacobsen makes extensive use of their work. Ellenberger always insisted that the historian must distinguish carefully between fact and conjecture, a caution not apparent in this sensational tract.

Let us return to another charge of Esterson's, notably that Freud grossly misrepresented the nature of his own reception and exaggerated the rejection and contumely of his contemporaries. Consider the reception of *The Interpretation of Dreams.*

The American historian Norman Kiell has painstakingly corrected the arguments for a largely joyous reception of this and other Freud works by some earlier authors who were eager to refute Ernest Jones' stories of persecution. First, only six hundred copies were sold in the first nine years after publication. It was reviewed, fairly extensively, and Kiell located 22 reviews between 1899 and 1902, in newspapers and literary, philosophical, or theological journals. Only three of them were in professional journals. While lay reviewers tended to respond favorably, his psychiatric colleagues did not. For them it was a "return to old wives' psychiatry." On the other hand, Freud's own condensation "On Dreams," published in a medical journal, did better. A few physicians interested in psychotherapy, Bleuler, Jung, and Albert Moll, found it pathbreaking: it established that dreams had a psychological significance, could lead to an understanding of human motivation, and were not merely the meaningless result of physiological processes, one of the then-current explanations. Nevertheless, as Decker shows, there were serious reservations about the book.

When one considers that Freud's self-image was that of a scientist, it is not difficult to conceive that the relative silence and the disapproval of some of a few prominent neurologists and psychiatrists, as opposed to the approval of laymen, i.e., clergymen and literary people, was a blow, as was the paucity of sales of what he regarded as his masterpiece. As Kiell has demonstrated, Freud's work was often received by colleagues as well-written, interesting, provocative, opening up new vistas, but also unscientific—again hardly what Freud would have wanted by way of a reception.

Obviously Freud exaggerated the negative aspects of his reception, as might any author unduly sensitive to criticism, but the strictures over his arbitrary, unscientific, and reckless methods must have stung. Freud's exaggeration is hardly pathological or evidence of willful distortion of the record, let alone paranoia. And as for Esterson's claim that Albert Moll was a martyr to Freud's denigration, in fact, Freud cited Moll several times and looked with favor on his theory of contrectation, an impulse toward contact with another person. In a lengthy footnote to *Three Essays on Sexuality* he included Moll among those authorities who regarded manifestations of

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sexuality before age eight as the result of "morbid predisposition." And this, in fact, was precisely Moll's position; Freud's statement hardly constituted subjecting Moll to "victimization." Freud's irritation at Moll may well have been caused by Moll's conclusion that Freud's methods did not cure and that Freud might unwittingly have suggested the memories his patients discovered.

In fact, Freud transformed existing theories of sexuality in children by arguing not only that the sexual drive began in infancy but also that it was shaped by the earliest family relationships. And it is this second component that constituted his major difference with Moll and, I think, underlay his jealous and angry claims for priority.

Freud was not pleased by the over-zealous attitude of some of his defenders and referred to one of them as "that congenital fanatic of orthodoxy, who happens by mere accident to believe in psychoanalysis rather than in the law given by God on Sinai-Horeb."

Let me turn to Peter Swales's conjectural assertion that Freud had an affair with his sister-in-law and revealed the fact in a dream he attributed to a young man of academic background he met on a trip. The argument is clever. But does it seem plausible? What courting of disaster would lead Freud to publish a dream and a dream interpretation that in fact would have revealed to the world this incestuous affair—when within the year he would attempt once more to gain a professorship at the University of Vienna? As Swales himself notes, the revelation would have threatened his marriage, his family, his professional standing. And Swales suggests that Freud could publish it because the facts of his life were not known. But this is nonsense. Plenty of people in Vienna and elsewhere knew the Freuds and their household. There were rumors at the time, whether founded on reality or not we have as yet no sure way of knowing.

Moreover, as Kurt Eissler has observed, why would Minna, on whom an abortion presumably had been performed at Freud's expense, to believe Swales, betray her lover to a total stranger, Carl Jung? I suggest all this strains credulity, at least my credulity. And when did Jung reveal all this? At the time the episode occurred, or in his dotage when memory sometimes slips? All we know now is that Jung told several people of the matter: his mistress Antonia Wolff, a few others, and finally, the American theologian who first publicized the charges in 1963. It would help to know more from any available information the Jung archives may hold. Until then and until the Freud-Minna correspondence of those crucial years around 1900 is made available, we are, as Swales himself suggests, indulging in pure speculation, based largely on coincidences that I shan't enumerate, but for each one of which an alternative explanation could be argued. Albrecht Hirschmueller, who has examined available Bernays family correspondence

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in the Freud archives, has insisted that the supposed liaison is a fiction. (This is one more example where the policies of the Freud archives until very recently had done everyone, including Freud, a major disservice.)

Swales's unsupported assertion is fundamental for the argument of John Kerr's book, *A Most Dangerous Method,* on the Freud-Jung split, a work I admire for its literacy and for the important scientific issues it raises. However, there are problems with some of its arguments and conclusions. Kerr, an historian and editor, assumes the gospel truth of the Minna affair. It is essential to his interpretation of two important matters: first, when Freud refused to disclose his associations to a dream on the trip to America and said he could not risk his authority; what he refused to disclose was this intimate relationship. But why need it be the Minna affair? Why not something else? It is pure conjecture on Kerr's part. Second, he assumes that Jung's knowledge of the affair and Freud's of Jung's relationship with Spielrein was a kind of symmetrical blackmail that each held over the other and that underlay their final split. But let us assume the Minna affair did not happen. Were there not plenty of grounds for disagreement on fundamental matters? What I think stuck in Freud's craw, as it were, was his sense of Jung's equivocal religiosity and mysticism. After all, Jung soon was exploring mandalas, the Tibetan *Book of the Dead*, and alchemy, along with astute observations about the life cycle and the stereotypical modes of perception that the theory of archetypes entailed. If the Minna affair did not occur, then it cannot be argued that Freud was blinded to the significance of present conflict because he could not face the implications of his sexual imbroglio in 1909 and 1910. There is little evidence that Freud was conflicted or deeply disturbed in this particular period of his life. What Ellenberger calls his creative illness that led to his self-analysis occurred earlier, beginning in 1894 and ending around 1900, just as the split with Freud inaugurated Jung's creative illness. Finally, Zvi Lothane has argued persuasively that Spielrein played no role at all in Freud's break with Jung.

But let us take up Kerr's far more serious concerns, that the split and the defection of the Swiss, Bleuler and Jung, prevented the psychoanalytic movement from becoming a truly scientific forum in which data were openly criticized and tested.

Kerr, like Esterson, also deplores Freud's inability to spell out precisely how he made his interpretations, on what evidence, and with what criteria of judgment. These are, of course, serious charges. But I think a close reading of Freud's case histories suggests how it was done, since Freud is perfectly candid about his reconstructions and what the patient actually remembered.

I am at a loss to see quite how Freud—or Jung for that matter—could have produced a text that would have encompassed the interpretation of the large variations that would inevitably arise in individual cases, although

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the psychoanalytic theory of symbolism represented an attempt to do so. The discussions of free association in *Studies in Hysteria* indicate clearly the intricate nature of the process. A cookbook for psychoanalysis or analytical psychology may in fact be an impossibility because so much of the validity of an interpretation depends on the fit of a variety of factors, as any inspection of Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*—or his case histories—would surely confirm. What Freud did require was that those who wished to use psychoanalysis learn it on an apprenticeship basis—a not unreasonable request. Both Jung and Bleuler argued against the opponents of psychoanalysis that valid criticism had to be based on the proper use of the psychoanalytic method itself. And how would this be learned? Clearly, from another analyst. Precisely that basis obtains in academia and in much of science, subject of course to peer review. But in the case of early psychoanalysis, who were the peers? Bleuler did raise a vital point in his letters to Freud, that the Freudians were excluding those who disagreed with them from their new societies' meetings. In fact, Jung seems to have been the first to do so in Zurich, not Freud in Vienna. And Freud's letters to Sandor Ferenczi indicate that he gave considerable weight to Alfred Adler's arguments in dealing with some of his own patients.

Perhaps my imagination is defective, but I have been unable to visualize what Kerr or Sulloway might suggest as a truly scientific exchange over psychoanalytic matters in those years. Neither Kerr nor Sulloway, to my knowledge, has elaborated such a vision. Sulloway suggests that when Boyle wished to have his ideas tested, he gave directions for the reproduction of his air pump, which others proceeded to do. But this is a naive response to the challenge of psychotherapy. It hardly resembles making an air pump. Psychotherapy is a highly complex human interaction. In fact, only now with sophisticated recording and statistical techniques are we beginning to develop a true technology for the study of psychoanalysis and the effects of treatment and interpretation. As Joseph Weiss, who has done conscientious work in this field, has repeatedly said, good research in psychoanalysis is extremely difficult—and expensive.

This leads me back to Crews' eloquently argued thesis. Crews seems to believe that there is an ineluctable, indubitably established set of scientific psychological truths about important matters, proven by flawless experimental methods.

However, academic psychologists pursue a set of agreed-upon procedures for establishing the "scientific" nature of particular findings in relatively delimited areas of human experience. These methods are: agreement on the meaning of terms, i.e., operational definitions, and the use of statistical methods to assess results. In that sense psychology is scientific.

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But its concerns are often limited. (For those who wish to pursue this topic I suggest Drew Westen's excellent article in Lawrence Purvin's *Handbook of Personality* or Marie Jahoda's sophisticated *Freud and the Dilemmas of Psychology*.) Indeed, psychologists, like psychoanalysts, Marie Jahoda has argued, use converging validity for processes such as "attitudes" which cannot be directly observed but only inferred from responses elicited in different ways.

Psychoanalysis deals with far more intricate human interactions than are currently amenable to the two standardized procedures of academic psychology. As the psychoanalyst Robert Michels has argued, psychoanalysis may not yet be a scientifically testable psychology. But much of the recent research of Lester Luborsky, Joseph Weiss and Harold Sampson, Hartwig Dahl, Merton Gill, Mardi Horowitz, and the predictive work of John Bowlby and his students, as well as the summaries of scientific status by Fisher and Greenberg are impressive. Some of this work demonstrates that, with a careful definition of terms, analytic observers can agree upon the meaning of clinical material, although they may disagree on its theoretical implications. Psychoanalysis has given rise to a number of theories, often modified developments of Freud's, which have indeed been tested by methods acceptable to scientific psychologists and found to be reasonably plausible. What are some of these theories? 1) The existence of unconscious processes; 2) defensive operations such as repression, although its status is more equivocal; 3) aspects of Bowlby's attachment theory, which have provided important predictive propositions, notably that secure attachment early on is predictive of the child's well-being, and its opposite; 4) the oral and anal character; and finally, 5) transference. All these are derivative of psychoanalysis (although the research on unconscious processes has also had independent roots) and these empirical studies are precisely what Crews and other critics, for the most part, disdain to deal with.

Robert Holt has argued with Crews that free associations are data like any other and that conclusions about them can be reached in a disciplined way. Crews has replied that contamination by suggestion negates any attempt to discover the origin of a dream through free association. However, I would argue that there is much clinical evidence, not to be disdained, which suggests that emotional states underlying dreams can indeed be elicited through associations and that these are valuable for the clinical process. Moreover, Joseph Weiss and his colleagues in their correspondence with Gruenbaum have demonstrated convincingly that material surfaced in their research which the analyst could not possibly have known in advance and surely could not have suggested—a frequent enough experience for clinicians.

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Finally, Crews is barking up the wrong historical tree. The recovered memory and child abuse movements, as Ian Hacking shows, come not so much from the tradition of Freudian psychoanalysis as from the nineteenth-century French tradition of hypnosis and multiple personality. Indeed, both these recent American movements flourished as the Freudian tide waned. Some of its proponent, Crews assumes to be psychoanalysts involved in the recovered memory movements. Leonore Terr, for instance, is not a psychoanalyst. Common to the early "Kindergarten Freud," and to these recent movements, is trauma as a cause of alterations of consciousness. A second element is the determination of character by childhood experience. But the English and the Americans have placed a far greater emphasis on this than did the mature Freud. Indeed it is an Anglo-Saxon gloss. Freud remained less of an environmentalist, and was more aware of the forces of innate disposition than American versions of psychoanalysis would suggest. The major contribution of Freud is the concept of repression as the result of conflict. But conflict does not seem to be a primary emphasis of the recovered memory movement, and to blame Freud for its excesses is simply mistaken.

Finally, let us look at the credentials of the critics. The most vehement include a growing bevy of literary critics, but there are also philosophers, an historian of science, and an academic psychologist—Crews, Gruenbaum, Cioffi, Sulloway, and Macmillan. The most balanced seem to be those, such as Patrick Mahony, who have had experience with psychotherapy or psychoanalysis. It is after all in the therapeutic field that Freud's conceptions originated and have had their most useful and widespread application. One would hope that his critics have had either some first-hand knowledge of the field they so confidently criticize or a wide acquaintance with its theoretical, clinical, and experimental literature.

What common characteristics link the Freud-bashers? First, sweeping and startling claims often backed only by conjecture and sometimes by a scholarship of truncated quotations and tortured contexts. Second, an ahistorical perspective that fails to understand what Freud was doing in the context of his time and by comparison with his contemporaries. Third, omission of the complexity of Freud's arguments, sometimes by selective quotation, sometimes by simply ignoring crucial parts of an essay or a case history.

How do these brief analyses of the critics bear on their overall accusations against Freud? Was Freud a scientist? I believe he was in the context of his time. He surely was as scientific as Krafft-Ebing or Albert Moll, Emil Kraepelin or Eugen Bleuler. Did he lack personal integrity? I doubt it. He was impulsive, given to hatred of selected enemies, ambitious, eager for priority, and incautious in generalizing. His case histories, like any finished narrative, probably smoothed over difficulties and made for a coherent

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whole. Freud was a consummate writer who polished his work through many drafts and destroyed his case notes except those for the Rat Man case. But these characteristics hardly demonstrate an aptitude for chicanery. Was he a poor theorist? In many ways he was a brilliant theoretician; indeed his theoretical leads have created further explorations of the major themes he pioneered: the personal meaning of dreams and symptoms, the role of early family relationships in later behavior, and the importance of unconscious processes and of sexuality. As John Burnham has suggested, Freud's was the only instinct theory to survive the stringent criticism of the 1920s. Was he a consistent theorist? No, as a number of psychoanalysts themselves have argued. Indeed, he never claimed to have created a final and unchangeable theoretical structure. Did he establish a cult? I think not, as the analysts' extensive revisions of his conclusions clearly demonstrate.

Finally, we need to ask why intemperate Freud-bashing has become modish. Some of the reasons are obvious and derive from the nature of the psychoanalytic movement itself: the overly optimistic claims of the Freudians in the years of their dominance; their occasional arrogance and attempts at universal and reductive explanations of complex social, political, and personal phenomena; the failures of psychoanalysis to achieve replicable findings and some of its therapeutic goals. But beyond those internal shortcomings lie broader cultural shifts: the vogue of anti-heroics, indeed, the concentration on faults and foibles in the treatment of historical figures; the erosion of privacy; and finally the decline of truly rational debate and fairness in the public discussion of controversial issues.

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JOHN PATRICK DIGGINS

Pragmatism: A Philosophy for Adults Only

Most Americans believe that the young need to go to school, not only to learn about the world and to attain skills in order to prepare for an occupation, but also to become ultimately good, responsible citizens. Yet herewith a puzzle. Why do Americans accept in politics what they reject in education? Office seekers are praised for behaving in expedient ways that are objectionable when taught in the classroom. Adults can be practical, students should be ethical.

After almost every election one can count on seeing headlines announcing that the winners were the realists. "Evolving From Ideology Toward Pragmatism" was the title of one recent article in the daily press. Another hailed the advent of "post-ideological, pragmatic politics." Pragmatism, we are told, is about performance and results, facing practical issues, and candidates behaving more as managers and tacticians than as moralists and theoreticians. The challenge is not to educate the people as to what they ought to do but to calculate what they will do on election day. When pragmatism prevails in politics the distinction between the Democrats and Republicans disappears along with party loyalty to an ideology. Thus journalists praise President Clinton and Mayor Guiliani as "both part of a new generation of politicians who are seen as problem-solvers first and partisan operatives second."

Often the same Americans who praise pragmatism in politics are disturbed to discover its meaning in education. In his best-selling *The Closing of the American Mind*, the late Allan Bloom opened his book with the observation: "There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative." Bloom desired education to teach his beloved classical philosophers of antiquity and to raise such questions as "Who am I?" and "What is Man?" His text sold like hotcakes in airports as well as bookstores. But pragmatism regards such "ultimate" questions as "who" and "what" as futile because unanswerable.

Another best-seller was William J. Bennett' s *The Book of Virtues*. Its author sought to have students appreciate such ideals as truth, value, the inclination to obey the rules of justice, and moral character formed by rea-

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son and will. In pragmatism there are no ideals beyond experience and one need only attend to, not the abstract imperatives of justice or what is good and excellent, but simply the empirical data of science and society' s conventions. The historian Gertrude Himmelfarb protests that the new scholarship leads to the "abyss," where everything is power and domination without any basis of ethics founded either on inner moral sentiments or on external objective standards.

Where does pragmatism propose to find a basis for truth and morality? Seeing all life as contingent and truth as relative to circumstance, morality would be determined by the practical and functional, by what works successfully, or, as John Dewey put it, when faced with a "problematic situation," try whatever "will do" and if it does the job, it will do. The difficulty with this resolution, as pragmatism's philosopher-critics have pointed out, is that behavior can function successfully and still be ethically repugnant. Today in China female infanticide has succeeded in controlling population growth, and thus it has met the pragmatic criterion of having achieved its intended consequences. How could it possibly be defended morally?

Once, pragmatism promised to revitalize American liberalism, and several of its early exponents were among the country's outstanding essayists and journalists. But some, like Randolph Bourne, immediately sensed its inadequacies in the first world war, pointing out the embarrassment of a philosophy that somehow assumed it could control what it also regarded as inevitable, a philosophy "which has no place for the inexorable [and yet] should have adjusted itself so easily to the inexorab[ility] of war." Others, like Walter Lippmann, accused Dewey of turning philosophy itself upside down. Traditionally, Lippmann wrote in *The New Republic* in 1915, our philosophy drew "sanction from God, or nature or evolution. The theory was that our philosophies determined us; we conformed to them. Now comes Professor Dewey to argue that we ought to make our philosophies for our own needs and purposes."

To the contemporary philosopher Richard Rorty, such a critique would merely be asking pragmatism to return to the very situation from which it had set out to liberate philosophy, a return to metaphysical foundations, first principles, absolutes, and other ideas that antedate experience and thus are in no position to control it. After the publication of Rorty's seminal text, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979), which brilliantly demonstrated that Dewey and William James presaged European post-structuralists in realizing that truth could no longer be based on coherence to a scheme or correspondence to the real, pragmatism began to flourish on the American campus. Before long African-American scholars and

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feminists were writing books on the subject, presumably because pragmatism led to pluralism, diversity, and an understanding that racial and gender categories are little more than "social constructions." But academics have yet to face the awkward fact that pragmatism can be, in the field of politics, expediency at the expense of integrity.

Bourne saw that a philosophy of adjustment could adapt itself to anything and everything; Lippmann similarly saw that such a philosophy could well spell the end of liberalism as an ideology of principled conviction. The idea that a philosophy could validate itself with a "cash nexus" as its criterion of knowledge played into the hands of politicians even when they knew little of pragmatism as an anti-epistemological position. For there is nothing in pragmatism that would preclude the politician from using it in the service of power.

In contrast to the rationalist, advised James, the "pragmatist talk[s] about truths in the plural, about their utility and satisfactoriness, about the success with which they 'work.' " The pragmatist "account[s] of truths in the plural" have "only this in common, that they pay." Does not the philosopher have a duty to know truth as something other than our own needs and interests? "Our obligation to seek truth is part of our general obligation to do what pays. The payments true ideas bring are the sole why of our duty to follow them. Identical ways exists in the case of health and wealth." And politics, too.

Few philosophers have concerned themselves with the opportunistic political implication of pragmatism. When pragmatism first came upon the American scene at the end of the last century, it promised to free up our thinking and save us from the rigidities of dogma and supposedly obsolete systems of authority. Seeing truth as vanishing before the forces of change, pragmatism's aim was not so much the goal of establishing truth as responding to the vicissitudes of experience and thereby enabling us to cope with events. It had repercussions in many disciplines.

In education, the shift was from substance to process, with students instructed not in what to think but in how to think. In sociology, the shift was from the "inner-directed" self to the "outer-directed" personality, with students advised to regard their minds as social products. In economics, one saw a shift away from natural law, with students taught to understand the price system as sustained by the circulation of money and consumption of goods. In law, the shift was from intention to consequences, with attorneys informing their clients of not necessarily what is right or wrong but what they can and cannot get away with in the courts. And in politics? The shift was from Aristotle to Vince Lombardi; not how to govern and lead but how to run and win.

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Every politician reaches for the adjective "pragmatist" to persuade us that it is not necessary to have a moral stance or even a clear program for the future—what one president called "the vision thing." In view of the close relationship between high-sounding pragmatism and low-level opportunism, it is amazing that in recent years the philosophy of pragmatism has caught on in the academy, especially among radical activists. In Charlene Haddock Siegried's *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric*, we are told that Dewey and James taught us how reality turns on perception and interpretation and how multiple perspectives can be radically transformative. Black scholars like Alaine Locke and W. E. B. Du Bois have also been reinterpreted as pragmatists, and so too the reformer Jane Addams. Dewey's own political philosophy is offered as "radical democracy." Yet in American history it was more often the moralists, and not the pragmatists, who championed the cause of freedom and justice, and it is worth remembering that Martin Luther King, Jr. drew upon Dewey's antagonist, Reinhold Niebuhr, for a more compelling view of power and struggle.

When Richard Rorty left philosophy behind and went on to write on social and political issues in *Contingency. Irony. and Solidarity*, he was following the footsteps of Dewey and trying to bring the life of the mind to bear upon public philosophy. Dewey believed that the old philosophy needed to be replaced by science and scientific method as the basis of its reconstruction, while Rorty advocated "the linguistic turn," assuming that since all reality turned on rhetoric and description, change would follow the method of "redescription." But Rorty has been no more successful than Dewey in transforming America's political culture of property and opportunity, what Alexis de Tocqueville once described as "enlightened self-interest," a materialism he hoped would be "virtuous" rather than "pernicious." It may be that since pragmatism is a philosophy of success, pragmatists themselves have been unable to deal with failure in the world of politics. One wonders why contemporary academics ever thought they could turn to pragmatism as a way out of our current dilemmas.

A refusal to face failure characterizes Rorty's latest effort in *Achieving Our Country*. For a scholar who has left the field of philosophy convinced that it can no longer deliver the certainty of cognitive knowledge, Rorty has no trouble with his own certainty about historical knowledge. His present quarrel is with the cultural leftists in the academy who, despairing of knowing ultimate reality, are content to fly off into high theory where they can show us that we are all victims of manipulated interpretations and representations. Rorty would like to see the Academic Left continue in the spirit of the Old Left of the thirties, the "reformist Left" that galvanized

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around, it is claimed, John Dewey and Franklin D. Roosevelt, and believed in the possibility of "agency" and "solidarity."

One sympathizes with Rorty's worry about our present state of fragmentation and disarray. But to recommend that we can overcome it by returning to the thirties boggles the historical mind. The thirties was the most acrimonious, disunited, and, after the Popular Front, cynical decade in American history. To read the journals of the era involving the Trotskyists, socialists, Stalinists, Lovestonites, Schachtmanites, and other -ists and -ites is to know why "a herd of independent minds" would never allow itself to be rounded up and branded with a single cause.

And what in the world does Rorty mean by "reformist Left"? When Sidney Hook and others led the Left in the thirties, they distinguished their own "revolutionary" organizations from liberalism and social democracy, the Norman Thomases of the world and their seemingly innocent faith in gradualism and amelioration. Becoming a reform socialist right now, said John Dos Passos in 1933, would be as effective as drinking "near beer."

Rorty rarely stops to consider what it would mean to return to the thirties in order to recapture Roosevelt for the Left. Would it not mean a return to a Democratic Party that dared not break with the "solid South" and racial segregation; to the welfare state and its dependencies; to an environment of dustbowls, breadlines, and debilitating insecurity; and to a fiscal policy too unsure of itself to fight successfully the Great Depression? And to return to Dewey as a beacon for our troubled times is to return to an untroubled thinker who warned America to stay out of the war with fascism and who remained silent in the face of the Holocaust and Hiroshima.

When Rorty invokes Roosevelt and Dewey in the same breath the student of history becomes breathless. Dewey had no use for Roosevelt or the New Deal. Dewey desired to see the country move to the Left and turn against capitalism and liberal pluralism, which he saw as subverting democracy rather than sustaining it. And he invoked Thomas Jefferson, the quintessential individualist, to combat individualism! As for FDR, the president, the philosopher declared, had no coherent plan, only a grab bag of innovations. Ironically, as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. observed, America's leading philosopher of experimentalism judged the New Deal too experimental.

But more is involved than simple misjudgment. To join Dewey to Roosevelt as a means of the American Left's political revival would be to join together what is essentially immiscible. In *The Public and Its Problems*, Dewey criticized de Tocqueville, Lippmann, and others who saw mass society as a threat to political authority. America, Dewey held, has more to fear from the ruling classes and their leaders than from the democratic masses and their common folk. The patrician Roosevelt saw things differently; small wonder he was accused by his rich friends of betraying his class

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when he took on, in the second phase of the New Deal, Wall Street and the ruling classes. Seldom in American history have the democratic people posed such a threat to ruling elites. The lesson could never sink in for Dewey, for what he trusted least Roosevelt trusted most—bold, imaginative leadership, the exceptional person who could be, to use Hook's terms, both "eventful" and "event-making."

Rorty may feel he is free from the demands of truth, but as a pragmatist he must still come to terms with experience. How can he rhapsodize about the thirties without dealing with the depression, the rise of Hitler, Stalinism, the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War, and the Ethiopian War, which had African-Americans and Italian-Americans battling each other on the streets of New York? Ignoring such chastening episodes, Rorty invokes Dewey and others as though the Left's pipe dreams can be sustained even after we awake to reality. But Daniel Bell has a better grasp of the meaning of the thirties. "There are few figures, of the last twenty years, and few books, that can match the stature of Dewey, Beard, Holmes, Veblen, Brandeis," wrote Bell in *The End of Ideology* (1960). "But to read these men today is to be struck by their essential optimism. . . .Ours, a 'twice-born' generation, finds its wisdom in pessimism, evil, tragedy, and despair. So we are both old and young 'before our time.'"

Rorty refuses to allow America to be old. His idea of American history is to leap from hope to hope, from Whitman to Dewey, and to keep reaffirming the cult of the yea. There is not a touch of the romantic in Rorty, the need to ransack the past in order to dwell on its disillusionments and melancholy. Still, Rorty deserves better than the treatment he recently received in the neoconservative *The Weekly Standard*, where he is depicted as an academic entrepreneur enjoying fame and fortune, a *manqué* philosopher only interested in self-promotion.

On the contrary, Rorty is an anguished moralist, and despite his militant atheism, he is closer to America's religious legacies than he would perhaps care to acknowledge. George Santayana used to say of Dewey that he "inherits the Puritan conscience" since he practices a "social moralism" without appealing to theology or philosophical foundations. The same description may apply to Rorty, who remains convinced that the Academic Left can only begin to make a difference when it ceases its yearning to comprehend reality and instead replaces the quest for knowledge with the more promising need to hope. What is such a postmodernist stance but the old Calvinist injunction that it is better to will the good than to know the truth?

Yet the history of the school of American pragmatism is hardly encouraging to those who would appropriate it for political purposes.

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Charles Sanders Peirce, the founding genius of the school, was skeptical of democracy, believed that philosophy should stick to scientific questions only, and came from a family that opposed the abolition of slavery. Dewey, who did more than any other thinker to influence American education, wrote little on such social issues as poverty and stayed completely clear of the controversial issues of race and the status of women. Lest it be said that such issues came to the fore only in the sixties, and thus earlier thinkers can hardly be criticized for ignoring them, one should remember that race and the woman question were addressed by Thorstein Veblen, Lippmann, Bourne, and other Greenwich Village intellects. But it may be the philosopher James who poses the most awkward political record, however beloved he remains as a human being.

The "senseless 'anarchist' riot in Chicago," James wrote in 1888, referring to the Haymarket affair, "is the work of a lot of pathological Germans and Poles. All the Irish names are among the killed and wounded policemen." Only one policeman was killed in a strike that called for reducing the workday to eight hours. But James believed the strikers were "senseless" because they supposedly stood outside the mainstream of American values in which community and individuality developed together.

The Haymarket riot stirred the American conscience, dividing society along class lines and often within the family itself. Although his friends urged him to sign a petition against the imminent execution of the convicted anarchists, James refused. "When you're not sure, don't act," he explained. "It is very hard to forecast consequences, and all that is said about making martyrs and embittering the working classes fails to affect me, if the men be guilty." (The governor of Illinois did pardon them.)

Our contemporary academics and philosophers alike should be startled by James's stance. Today on campus the philosophy of pragmatism, together with postmodernism and deconstruction, is presented as radically "subversive" and "transgressive," as though the existing social order should tremble when students and professors speak its language. James, however, was prudently conservative on such social issues as labor-capital relations and the traditional domestic role of women.

Even more ironically, James's stance on politics contradicts his philosophy. In "The Will to Believe" and elsewhere, James argues that it is precisely when one is in a state of doubt that one is obligated to act. Not to act and experiment, not to exercise will and effort, is to risk losing the possibility of knowing truth as a matter of effects and outcomes. In such essays James had religion in mind, the possibility of overcoming doubt and anxiety by means of belief in God. But in politics, with the exception of his opposition to the Spanish-American War, James hesitated before the unknown future. Pragmatism failed its own test of praxis.

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To those of us brought up on the promise that truth shall make us free, pragmatism seems an insipid proposition, a "technique" for avoiding what must be confronted. For all pragmatism's emphasis on getting along without truth, it was the natural rights truths of the Declaration of Independence that came to be incorporated into the Constitution, and, through the equal protection of the laws, that served to promote the cause of civil rights, women's rights, and gay and lesbian rights. Pragmatism dismisses the whole foundation of natural rights as "fictions" as mythical as the state of nature.

But it may be the case that what pragmatism dismisses the public wants to have taught. Every opinion poll indicates that parents want their children to learn something about truth, however defined, and to have reverence for the sacred and a patriotic respect for their country. And, as Alan Wolfe has discovered in the research put forth in his valuable book, *One Nation, After All,* Americans subscribe to a "sacred trinity" involving God, family, and country. But when we enter the world of politics such principles seem less demanding and seldom are they applied to those holding office or running for it. It would be comforting to think the moral indifference with which Americans regard their political leaders is a sign of tolerance and maturity. But it may have more to do with a political culture that has become so pragmatic that it lusts after what James himself once denounced as the "bitch-goddess of success." There can be no doubt that the older critics of pragmatism foresaw the coming of this squalid scenario.

Today we can readily know what Lippmann meant when he warned that the modern philosophy of pragmatism could provide no check on politics since it refused to submit to "something outside ourselves." Politics, too, defers to nothing outside of its own drive to power and office. Philosophy and politics have this in common: neither need make themselves consonant with any preexisting principle; they only need to make happen what the will desires to happen. Hence the disjunction of the realms. For while we continue to want our students to be moral in order that they be responsible, we allow our politicians to be pragmatic to assure that they be successful. While in politics everything is not only local but relative, and hence behavior cannot possibly be judged by a single standard of ethical conduct, in school we expect honesty from our students and do not allow lying and cheating, or, it should be added, sexual misconduct. It seems that America has a philosophy of politics that comes close to pornography—meant for adults only.

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IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

Totalitarian Visions of the Good Society: Arendt

Arendt made many small errors for which her critics will never forgive her. But she also got many of the big things right, and for that she deserves to be remembered.

Amos Elon

The publication of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* in 1951 established Hannah Arendt as a major figure in postwar political theory. In this work she attempted to provide a unitary approach to totalitarianism, seeing differences between national socialism and communism as of lesser significance than the organizational and cultural linkages that such systems have with each other—a common base in the leadership principle, in single party politics based on mass mobilization rather than individual voluntary participation, and not the least, in a near insatiable desire to expand from nation to empire, whether directly through military adventure or indirectly through political infiltration.

Anti-Semitism functioned differently in Germany under Hitler and in Russia under Stalin, but they had the same common roots: the existence of disparities between social classes and the need for objectifying an enemy responsible for all shortcomings and defeats suffered by nations and systems. Arendt's powerful critique of anti-Semitism was directly linked to her participation in Jewish affairs once she came to the United States. She served as Research Director of the Conference on Jewish Relations between 1944 and 1946, and then as executive director of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction in New York between 1949 and 1952.

Arendt's views on genocide extended far beyond *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Indeed, she developed a general theory of totalitarianism in which the subject of genocide was thoroughly explored. In defining Nazism, she argued

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against the idea that it is simply a distorted extension of Western culture: "Nazism owes nothing to any part of the Western tradition, be it German or not, Catholic or Protestant, Christian, Greek or Roman. . . .On the contrary, Nazism is actually the breakdown of all German and European traditions, the good as well as the bad."

Arendt, rather than view genocide as a special property of Germans or Austrians (or any other people), considered it as nihilism in action, "basing itself on the intoxication of destruction as an actual experience, dreaming the stupid dream of producing the void." Not a few of Arendt's critics consider this formulation as apologetics, a way to reconcile personal relationships with politically conservative mentors and lovers like Martin Heidegger with a larger series of liberal, and sometimes radical, claims. But, whatever the truth of such biographical analyses, her views on national types are well within the mainstream of twentieth-century social theory.

The single most important element in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* as it pertains to genocide is that prospects for mass murder and selective mayhem are embodied in the structure of totalitarianism as a system rather than in the national characteristics of any particular people. The forms of totalitarianism may vary, but the content allows for genocidal acts regardless of the ideological proclivities of the extremist regimes.

The ground for such genocidal actions is prepared by the denial of citizenship, of political and legal rights of the victim class. In a brilliant examination and support of Edmund Burke's critique of abstract arguments of human rights that are divested of concrete sentiments of those natural rights that spring from being part of a nation, Arendt notes: "The survivors of the extermination camps, the inmates of concentration and internment camps, and even the comparatively contented people could see without Burke's arguments that the abstract nakedness of being nothing but human was their greatest danger. Because of it they were regarded as savages and, afraid that they might end by being considered beasts, they insisted on their nationality, the last sign of their former citizenship, as their only remaining and recognized tie with humanity." And, in a stunning conclusion to the segment on imperialism, Arendt points out: "[A] man who is nothing but a man has lost the very qualities which make it possible for other people to treat him as a fellow man." And this stripping the Jews of legal rights through deprivation of the rights of citizens per se is the essential and necessary (if not sufficient) condition for genocide.

There is an ambiguity in her formulation in that, at times, it is the size and power of government that provide the seeds for totalitarian rule, while at other times, it is the cultural and psychological conditions that define prospects for totalitarian domination. Thus totalitarianism depends on the assumption of power by the extremists at a time when state machinery is

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"frozen," or calcified and unable to remain a process. But totalitarianism is also made possible by the widespread installation of fear and what Arendt calls "total terror." And the totalitarians' system is one in which victims and executioners alike are selected without regard to personal conviction or sympathies, but only in terms of rigid "objective standards: i.e., who is a Jew. And who is an Aryan."

The Origins of Totalitarianism ends on a creative ambiguity, one hardly restricted to Arendt. A great deal of argument within political theory after World War Two focused on examinations of the causes of extremism and the breakdown of law and democratic order. We need to know whether it is politics or culture that defines the limits of power; for, otherwise, not only are we limited in understanding or responding to such ultimate horrors as the Holocaust, but the nature of democratic options as such remains in limbo. We need to determine whether totalitarianism is but an extension of the mobilization and massification of political processes or something quite different and antithetical to those processes.

Arendt attends to this ambiguity in a work that appeared a decade later. After *The Human Condition,* which might well be seen as an interlude rather than a continuation of the earlier arguments about her German mentor, Karl Jaspers, she returns squarely to the problem of totalitarian systems and political change in what may well be her most underrated effort, *On Revolution.* Indeed, this work too is dedicated to Jaspers who, in *The Future of Mankind,* "dared to face both the horrors of nuclear weapons and the threat of totalitarianism." *On Revolution* addressed the world one step further; with the nuclear powers at a stalemate, revolutions had become the principal political factor of the time. Understanding revolution, for Arendt, became the key to unlocking the future.

While *On Revolution* does not directly address issues of genocide, Arendt does illumine new directions, in coming to a psychological profile of political absolutism, a sense of how the "passions" and the "taste" for power lead to the emergence of the genocidal state. She takes Robespierre's theory of revolutionary dictatorship as the quintessential model of the European encounter with politics, an encounter that ends in *anti-politique.* "The thirst and will to power as such, regardless of any passion for distinction, although characteristic of the tyrannical man, is no longer a typically political vice, but rather that quality which tends to destroy all political life, its vices no less than virtues." With the appeal to the political as a framework for rational discourse, the sort of unique qualities that endeared American and British civilization to Arendt, there can be no democratic society, so that even in Revolutionary France from 1789 to 1794, the shouts of the day were "Long Live the Republic," and not "Up with Democracy."

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Arendt remained in all her works the jurist, the legal analyst. Her concerns were to plumb the depths of legitimacy, not as an abstract discourse on nationalism, but as an effort to review the grounds that permit a people to survive even harsh and tyrannical conditions. In this, she was neither a conservative nor a liberal, at least not in any conventional modes of those concepts. To be sure, this difficulty in easy characterization may be that property in Arendt that has proven most irritating as well as most elusive to critics.

For example, Arendt saw in modern conservatism (in contrast to the writings of ancient Greek philosophers) a profound two-hundred-year response to the French Revolution, seeing it as a polemic in the hands of Edmund Burke, Alexis de Tocqueville, Eric Voegelin, and their modern followers. While liberals, for their part, were doomed to provide an uneasy rationalization for a totalitarian revolution they could neither quite understand, accept in full, nor reject. But the ambiguity of such formulations notwithstanding, in this way, she compelled a fresh reading of historical events of enormous magnitude.

It is questionable, and not at all certain, that Arendt had her causal ducks in a row. It would seem that Jacob Talmon, who also wrote on *The Origins of Totalitarianism* with a different perspective but remarkably similar conclusions, was closer to the mark in suggesting that the radical segment of the French Revolution, and the French Enlightenment before that, were the real source of polemics—both as a style suited to ideological thinking and as a substantive way to treat political power. But it may well be that conservatism for so many years did reveal reactive rather than proactive tendencies. It did so until it was once more linked to mass politics and political party life in America. But, of course, Arendt died just when the transformation of conservatism from a class-based theory to a mass-based practice was commencing. Yet these are considerations within democratic cultures that were far removed from the monolithic world of totalitarianism that allows for genocides.

As someone steeped in classical Catholic thought and the German legal tradition, the juridical order of things was critical to Arendt throughout her career. The legal system is that logical artifact that both makes possible and calls forth the loftiest aims of human beings, and at the other extreme, prevents or at least curbs the implementation of their most venal desires. These strongly ancient Jewish and classical Greek appeals to the legal as the logical were invoked by Arendt both to illustrate the survival of the human race and its function to limit and ultimately thwart the totalitarian temptation behind the genocidal invocation.

On Revolution is a continuation of discussions first broached in *The Human Condition* and in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Since this work is

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something less than social science and something more than mere speculation, perhaps a prosaic ordering of Arendt's materials is necessary. Overlooking her contempt for the "modern debunking 'sciences' psychology and sociology," I shall state her position in proposition form and offer possible lines of disagreement and further inquiry.

War and revolution have violence as their common denominator. Conflict derives from fratricidal instincts, and political organization has its roots in crime. Crucial to revolution in the modern age is the concurrence of the idea of freedom and the experience of new social beginnings, of apocalypse.

Revolution gains a new significance as war, its partner in violence, becomes an implausible way to effect social change. Total annihilation has transformed the character of the military from protector of *civitas* into a futile avenger. Even prior to the nuclear age, wars had become politically, though not yet physically, a matter of national survival because of the widespread fear that the vanquished power would suffer the subjugation of its political organization. Nontechnological factors in warfare have been eliminated so that the results of war may be calculated in advance with perfect precision. Foreknowledge of victory and defeat may well end a war that need never explode into reality. If we are to survive, this cannot become a century of warfare, but it most certainly will become a century of total revolutions. The universal goal of war is revolution. But even without the possibility of limited agreements, revolution will come to define the character of the modern uses of violence and the present impulse toward freedom and liberty.

Revolution in the modern age has been concerned with two distinct drives: liberation (absence of restraint and increase in social mobility) and freedom (political level of life). While liberation is consonant with various forms of government, freedom is possible only through a republican form of government, which explains why the American, French, and Russian revolutions all adopted this form of rule.

The two fundamental models of revolution are the American and French revolutions—though only the French Revolution became the basic model for Marxism. The American Revolution adhered to the original purpose of revolution—realizing freedom—while the French Revolution abdicated freedom in the name of historical necessity. The American Revolution was at one and the same time profoundly political and antihistorical and, no less, antipolitical and quite historical.

The French revolutionary model, which penetrated the ideological and organizational aspects of the Russian Revolution, was concerned with the social question—with problems of exploitation, mass alienation, and poverty. It was inspired by the idea of compassion but ended in a mindless

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passion. The American revolutionary model was concerned with the political question, with problems of politics and the predicaments that flowed from an elitist theory of mass human nature. Its revolutionary passion was mediated by norms and hence ended in compassion, or at least a sense of the worth of the process whatever the success of the policy.

The weaknesses of the classic French model are revealed in the abortive aspects of the major revolutions of the modern era—the Paris Commune, the Russian Revolution, and the Hungarian uprising. In each case there was the rise of two distinctive forces: the party, acting in the name of the people, and the voluntary associations (workers' councils, soviets, communes), or the people as a collective. In the betrayal of the revolution, the force of power over the people came through the consecration of political parties, whereas the council system, because it failed to realize itself as a new form of government (as in the American Revolution), tended to be short lived. This fact accounts for the perfidy of modern revolutionary movements—the breakdown of voluntary association and its replacement by a swollen bureaucracy.

These propositions indicate Arendt's morphology of revolution. But a number of problems arise. There is the relative absence of evidence. How does one evaluate such speculations? The abundant confidence with which *On Revolution* is written is far from persuasive. The unsystematic prose style, which keeps the reader hopping about looking for continuing threads, does not enhance a ready acceptance of her perspectives, even as one is drawn to her sentiments.

Arendt reveals little knowledge of modern warfare, that is, little about the ambiguities of modern conflict—counter-insurgency, paramilitary struggle, police action, guerrilla action—that would show that war is becoming obsolete. It might be correct to note that thermonuclear warfare would make total international conflict obsolete—since it is like a gun with two barrels pointing in opposite directions. But the absence of any distinction between war and annihilation throws all of the weight of her discussion on revolution into the questionable assumption that war is obsolete by reason of self-interest.

The absence of knowledge about contemporary warfare is excusable—but conceit is no reply. And when she states that "the only discussion of the war question I know which dares to face the horrors of nuclear weapons and the threat of totalitarianism, and is therefore entirely free of mental reservation, is Karl Jaspers' *The Future of Mankind,*" she is only revealing her ignorance of a widespread and valuable empirical literature. Nor is the definition of revolution particularly enlightening. To see revolution as having everywhere a violent quality is to fail to distinguish between change in social structure and strategies sometimes used in such

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changes. Even if we generously assume that Arendt is speaking exclusively in terms of political revolution, violence is not a necessary or sufficient component.

Contradictory statements blemish her presentation: "The part of the professional revolutionists usually consists not in making a revolution but in rising to power after it has broken out, and their great advantage in this power struggle lies less in their theories and mental or organizational preparation than in the simple fact that their names are the only ones which are publicly known." But elsewhere she says that "without Lenin's slogan 'All power to the Soviets' there would never have been an October Revolution in Russia." Which cliché should be believed? Arendt's repeated assertion that the consequence of revolution is always less freedom and liberty than previously existed is belied by an appreciation of the American Revolution. Indeed, it is precisely her dislike for the revolutionary process that causes her to search out special features in the American Revolution not found in Europe.

Arendt belongs in the unusual category of a revolutionary conservative. For, although she is bent on demonstrating the negative aspects of Thermidor and Robespierre and the positive aspects of the *Federalist Papers* and the founders of the American Republic, she nevertheless is seeking at the deepest level for a way to make revolutionary movements responsible to revolutionaries. Thus it is that councils of workers, soviets, and so forth are held to be useful models of voluntary control. The revolutionists constitute a "new aristocracy" that would properly spell the end of general suffrage. As Arendt puts it: "only those who as voluntary members of an 'elementary republic' have demonstrated that they care for more than their private happiness and are concerned about the state of the world would have the right to be heard in the conduct of the business of the republic." The revolutionary elite would be guardians of the nation. How this differs from the betrayal of revolutions by political parties and how this guardianship could avoid becoming a political party is not discussed.

Arendt respects the "spirit of revolution" but scores its failures to find an "appropriate institution." She has located such an institution in the voluntary councils that accompany revolutions, but her unwillingness to support her theory with evidence is amazing. For example, there is no discussion of the strengths or shortcomings of the late, lamented Yugoslav worker councils or of the Israeli *Kibbutzim*. This results from her reticence to address the political revolution of freedom in relation to the social revolution of abundance. Her comments reveal an awareness of the potential antagonism between economic development and political freedom, but not a consistent understanding of how and where state and society intersect, or toward what ends.

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The big unanswered question of revolution is precisely the mix between economic rationalization and political reason. Polarization of these may make a stimulating treatise, but it cannot define the experimental character of most contemporary revolutions. For Arendt, the French and American revolutions were creative opposites. For peoples of revolutionary lands, both stand as selective options in search of the new. If massive revolution defines the century, it might be wiser to reach for new combinations of policy and publics rather than to look with nostalgia upon the Greek city-states and their prudent elitism for solutions to modern problems of caste and class.

The various strands in her thinking on law, revolution, and the social order come together in her "report" on the Nazi destruction of the Jewish people, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. It is undoubtedly the most explosive statement on the trial of Adolf Eichmann, held in 1961 after his capture by Israeli security forces in Argentina. The work originated in a commission by *The New Yorker* to cover the trial and was finally written up in the summer and fall of 1962 while Arendt served as a fellow of the Center for Advanced Studies at Wesleyan University. The book itself was published in 1963, with a 1964 version that carried a postscript and reply to critics.

The work has been subject to such repeated and withering assaults and no less fatuous praise from sources remote to Hannah Arendt's way of viewing and thinking that it is best to harken back to the text itself. The biggest surprise is that the overwhelming burden of the book is a straight, legal narrative of the trial of one man in one courtroom for specific crimes against one people—the Jewish people. Arendt shares the position of the Israeli judicial system: Eichmann was guilty of heinous war crimes, and Israel, as the representative of the Jewish state and its people, had every right to execute the culprit.

The largest portion of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* is taken up with exposition and narrative: moving from the character of the German judicial system and its corruption under Nazism, to a biographical profile of Eichmann, onto the stages in the development of the Nazi plan for the genocide of the Jewish people leading up to the Wannsee Conference. The next large portion of the work is taken up with a series of brilliant historical sketches of deportations. The first wave came from Germany, Austria, and the Protectorates, the second wave from Western Europe, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Italy. This was followed by a third wave of deportations, from Central Europe, especially Hungary and Slovakia. At the level of historical sweep, Arendt's volume stands side by side with the works of Lucy Dawidowicz and Raul Hilberg.

The controversial elements are actually restricted to the epilogue and postscript. Indeed, even Arendt's description of the Nazi internment and

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killing centers at Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, and Theresienstadt, and recitation of the evidence and eyewitness accounts of the Holocaust follow a familiar path. There is no effort to dismiss, denigrate, or become disingenuous about the existence of the Holocaust, or even that it was aimed at the liquidation of the Jewish people. To be sure, it was the very specificity of the Nazi crimes against one sub-set of humanity that permits Arendt to reason that Israeli courts had full jurisdiction in the disposition of Eichmann, no less than the precedent set by the Allied courts after World War Two in the Nuremberg trials. So we must look at the ethical and psychological aspects of Arendt's volume for an answer as to why her work aroused such passions among scholars, politicians, and Jewish communities the world over.

The problem inheres in the subtitle rather than the title: *A Report on the Banality of Evil.* The choice of words was not casual or accidental. Arendt was in search of the why of the Holocaust even more than operational details. She aimed to understand how this SS colonel could perform such a hideous role in modern history, show little remorse, yet also display keen analytical insight into the trial processes no less than the killing fields he helped organize and supervise. Arendt located the problem in the nature of the bureaucratic mind. In this strict sense, she felt that banality was the most appropriate single-word description of Adolf Eichmann.

While not even Arendt's most bitter opponents would accuse her of being a Holocaust denier, there is a problem with the word *banality.* It strongly implies the mundane, the ordinary, the everyday inconveniences experienced by all creatures—great and small. To use such a term to describe Eichmann thus appeared as a form of clever apologetics, making him into an everyday functionary—interchangeable with other unimportant people and their passive followers. At the same time, for Arendt there is also a banality of goodness. In this category one might easily place Oskar Schindler—womanizer, profiteer, Nazi Party member, and savior of one thousand Jews from the ovens of Auschwitz. It was Arendt's special ability to appreciate the mixed motives from which human beings operate that account for good and evil alike. In this sense, her Kantian philosophical roots served her well as a student of the Holocaust.

The question thus arises, and Arendt admits to it, whether the trial was actually intended to punish a single person for his specific crimes, or if it was a symbolic assault on Germany's totalitarian regime between 1933-1945. In response, Arendt argued that the use of the word *banal* meant nothing more or less than a factual description of an evil man, but not a deranged one, an ambitious bureaucrat rather than a dedicated ideologue. Arendt observed of the judges in the Eichmann trial, "a conspicuous helplessness they experienced when they were confronted with the task they

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could least escape, the task of understanding the criminal whom they had come to judge." As might be imagined, this only rubbed salt into a wound—one that still has not healed nor even abated.

Arendt placed her finger on the soft underbelly of the trial, not only of Eichmann but of his likeness: to single out on the one hand the most monstrous of perverted sadists, and yet claim that he was intrinsically little else than a cog in the Nazi war machine, a figure representing the entire Nazi movement and anti-Semitism at large. While this might have passed with a disturbing nod, many were outraged by Arendt's further claim that it was only the physical extermination of the Jewish people that was a crime against humanity, and that only this, rather than the anti-Semitism of the murderers, was subject to punishment. But again, the issue was joined between Arendt and her critics, since there was a subtle denial of the uniqueness of the Holocaust in the long history of human savagery.

Arendt's careful outline of how the decision was made at the Wannsee Conference to exterminate the Jews, to make Europe *Judenrein* or Jew-Free, is chilling and numbing. It is among the best writing she was able to muster. And if there were strange elements, such as linking Eichmann to the Kantian precept of obedience to the law and a moral obligation, the actual savagery and fury of the Nazis and their more than willing helpers among the occupied nations can hardly fail to elicit a powerful response in readers even now.

An element arousing additional anger was a subtle equation of the victims with the victimizer. The participation of Jews in all sorts of Jewish Councils and Zionist emissaries (exempt from the normal victimization) in bad bargaining and at times even in bad faith, efforts to save Jewish souls by trafficking in monetary and commodity bribes to the Nazis, while not condemned by Arendt, are dealt with in less than sympathetic terms. That transport lists to concentration camps were often put together by Jews who sent many to their deaths and preserved the lives of some, has been well documented. But in Arendt's hands, such acts of complicity only deepen the notion of "banality" as a common feature of the tormentors and the tormented.

One can say that Arendt's book is a landmark in the psychology of the Holocaust. *Eichmann in Jerusalem* provides a foundation that makes possible a political psychology of Nazism far beyond earlier works—even of her own efforts to study the nature of totalitarian power and mass movements. If *Eichmann in Jerusalem* was found even by such admirers as Stephen Spender as "brilliant and disturbing," and by Hans Morgenthau as "troubling our consciences," it is because the psychological profile makes the Holocaust not a special event but a common human failing of civility and decency, induced by either an absence of or a breakdown in governance as

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a response to the human need for tranquility. Arendt wrote a work on Jews worthy of a German scholar and a classical Greek humanist. Whether the work captured the ultimate tragedy of the Jewish people in the twentieth century, or even the imagination of the Israeli citizens at the time, remains an open issue. But whatever turns out to be the ultimate judgment, this is clearly one of those rare works in which the object of the discourse is significant along with the subject of investigation.

The Life of the Mind represents a culminating philosophic effort to understand the life of the state. To be sure, it is not quite complete, and leaves less than one-third unrevealed. Even stating the obvious is bound to create some misunderstanding since Arendt disclaims being a philosopher or "professional thinker." Indeed, publication of a large part of the first volume, *Thinking,* in *The New Yorker,* not to mention that a widely respected but thoroughly commercial publisher issued the two volumes, might lend some weight to such a disclaimer. But, in fact, the work is thoroughly philosophical in the German classical tradition of Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Heidegger. It is a measure of Hannah Arendt's justifiable fame as the author of *The Origins of Totalitarianism, The Human Condition, On Revolution,* and *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* among others, that a work so demanding, requiring intimacy with major figures of philosophical history, would receive wide hearing. Under the circumstances, one might well have anticipated commercial drivel from editor or publisher. It is to their lasting credit that no such posthumous exploitation is attempted. McCarthy's postface is entirely professional and pellucid. Everyone connected with this project exhibited at least one central element of good judgment ("judging" was to have constituted the final volume of this trilogy). That element is good taste.

The Life of the Mind picks up on themes first expressed two decades earlier in *The Human Condition.* The first two parts of the new work, offered as the Gifford Lectures for 1973 and 1974 respectively, seem to express polar opposites. The earlier work emphasized the active life—comprised of what we are doing—labor, work, and action. The new work involves the contemplative life—thinking, willing, and judging. But this triad is only superficially antithetical to the earlier one. Labor, work, and action are interconnected as biosocial activities, whereas thinking, willing, and judging occupy far more autonomous realms in the contemplative life. The triads remain, and the polarities remain, but the special nature of philosophical activities is in asking unanswerable questions and hence establishing human beings as question-asking beings. In this way Arendt sought to get beyond the atomism that afflicts the social sciences in particular—the search for the magical key word: *society* for sociology, *culture* for anthropology, *polity* for political science, *money* for economics, and *personality* for psychology. The magic key is less in the artifact than in the demystification of all artifacts.

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The temptation to review *The Life of the Mind* as if flawed by virtue of being incomplete is not simple to resist. But there are so many broad hints, fragments from lectures, and outright statements on judgment, that the work can be examined as a complete effort. The relationships between thinking, willing, and judging are set forth early in the first volume. And like a profoundly risky move in chess, the disallowance of any intertranslatability between the three categories drastically weakens the work. For, instead of searching out areas of analytic linkages (i.e., ways in which the act of thinking involves willing and judging), instead of considering each of these as aspects of a naturalistic theory of mind—perhaps along the lines of H. G. Mead or Y. H. Krikorian—we are required to see each aspect as a windowless monad. It is curious that this should be so since Arendt was so familiar with Aristotle and the remarkable way a sense of emergence created linkages—biological issues into social, social into political, and political into ethical. Indeed, these basic categories have survived two thousand years, and if the contents of modern science are no longer Aristotelian, the twentieth-century impulse toward the unity of science remains inspired by the Greeks. This major dilemma notwithstanding, Arendt's is a thorough examination into basic concepts and thus transcends its own checkmate. She can at least claim a draw between the idealistic and naturalistic traditions that propel her work.

These volumes consecrate Hannah Arendt's life's work, even if they do not effect a synthesis of epistemology and ontology. For the essential statement in *Thinking,* made many times over as a variation on the theme of the mind, is the quintessential point about twentieth-century existence: it is not the struggle between theory and action that is central but the struggle between theory and theory. Thinking is the hallmark of a free person living in a free society. To reduce action to behavior and then interpret behavior as if it were pure thought is for Arendt the shared fallacy of dialectical materialism and behavioral psychology. Whether in the language of revolutionary act or operant conditioning, the pure activist fails to understand that reducing thinking to doing is the end of the process of thought and the beginning of thought control or behavior modification.

In place of the casual slogan about theory and its issuance into practice, Arendt early on poses the question: "What are we 'doing' when we do nothing but think?" The totalitarian temptation is to assume that those not engaged in the collective will, in the process of bringing about progress, are doing nothing. This is the metaphysical equivalent of the theological fear that idle hands make for idle minds. The reduction of metaphysics to a form of poetry by the positivist tradition is in fact a call for the repudiation of speculation as a human activity in itself. Arendt shrewdly notes that the crisis in philosophy, ontology, theology, social theory, etc., comes into

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being as a result of pronouncements by the intelligentsia itself. But what begins as a disputation among intellectual elites concludes with popular disbelief in the worthiness of thinking:

> These modern 'deaths'—of God, metaphysics, philosophy, and, by implication, positivism—have become events of considerable historical consequence, since, with the beginning of our century, they have ceased to be the exclusive concern of an intellectual elite and instead are not so much the concern as the common unexamined assumption of nearly everybody. . . .[Leaving aside] the issue. . .of political authority. . .our ways of thinking may be involved in this crisis[. But] our *ability* to think is not at stake; we are what man has always been—thinking beings. men have an inclination, perhaps a need, to think beyond the limitations of knowledge, to do more with this ability than use it as an instrument for knowing and doing.

The subjugation of the will to reason is more than an indication that, in the hierarchy of thinking, willing, and judging, willing comes in a distant third. That this portion of *The Life of the Mind* was completed before only fragments of the portion on judging were done should not suggest that the will somehow mediates the claims of thought and taste. Arendt is the political philosopher par excellence and, unlike Kant, her sense of philosophic categories was filtered through twentieth-century awareness of totalitarianisms. She sees will as a constant clash with thinking. In her words, "the will always wills to *do* something and thus implicitly holds in contempt sheer thinking." But more, this impulse to will translates itself into the constant search for the *novus ordo seclorum*. The will remains the final resting-place of "men of action." Activists demand forever new foundations, constantly destroying what was and is, in the name of the new and the yet to be. In this Arendt's strong conservatism emerges, certainly in her critique of the men of action:

> There is something puzzling in the fact that men of action, whose sole intent and purpose was to change the whole structure of the future world and create a *novus ordo seclorum* should have to go to that distant past of antiquity, for they did not deliberately [reverse] the time-axis and [bid] the young 'walk back into the pure radiance of the past'. . . .They looked for a paradigm for a new form of government in their own 'enlightened' age and were hardly aware of the fact that they were looking backward. More puzzling, I think, than their actual ransacking of

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> the archives of antiquity is that they did not rebel against antiquity when they discovered that the final and certainly profoundly Roman answer of 'ancient prudence' was that salvation always comes from the past, that the ancestors were *majors,* the 'greater ones' by definition.

I suspect that more than conservatism is at stake. For theorists of the act, of freedom, always had a way of terminating their freedom with their own visions of society. Since for Arendt the capacity of beginning is rooted in the human capacity for renewal, it requires no end point. Terminus is not freedom but death. In this sense, freedom as a system is a doomsday called utopia. That's why judgment becomes so important for her; it makes transcendence of will possible without a denial of reason. The esthetic sense is not an accoutrement but a necessary faculty that tells people that what is perfect to one person or one ruler may be imperfect to another person or ruler and downright ugly to yet a third person and a third ruler. Arendt locates the source of democratic survival in the pluralism of judgment.

What has consistently infuriated neo-Platonists and Marxists alike about the Kantian view of esthetic judgment is its distinction between beauty and taste on one hand and applicability and moral purpose on the other. Arendt states the Kantian argument quite bluntly:

> If you say, 'What a beautiful rose!' you don't arrive at this judgment by first saying, all roses are beautiful, this flower is a rose, hence it is beautiful. The other kind, dealt with in *the second part*, is the impossibility to derive any particular product of nature from general causes. . . .Mechanical in Kant's terminology means natural causes; its opposite is 'technical' by which he means artificial.

Judgment thus is concerned with that "enlargement of mind" that derives from evaluating "something fabricated with a purpose." But far from supporting an elitist vision of esthetics or culture, she draws the opposite, and populist, conclusion. Taste is a community sense (*gemeinschaftlicher Sinn*), and hence, while not all people are geniuses, all people are capable of rendering judgment. What is so terribly important about this populist vision of judgment as both autonomous from thinking and willing is that it provides the solution to the problem of democracy and also that basis of unity amongst the *polis.*

Arendt still leaves us with a problem: the contradiction between the idea of progress as the law of the human species and the idea of human dignity as an inalienable aspect of individual human beings. This presumably

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would have formed the nexus of the third volume, *Judgment*. For those to whom limitations on knowledge are a fact to be overcome rather than celebrated, the problem bequeathed by Kant and now by Arendt is a challenge of no small magnitude or light consequence.

Arendt suffered a dialectical passion, or at least a commitment to the reality of reification: the warfare between thought and common sense, the Greek question and the Roman answer, the gap between the past and the future, thinking and doing, the active life and the contemplative life, the impotence of the will versus the omnipotence of the will. This gives her writings a tremendous tension, a dramaturgical sensibility. Perhaps that is why she can so readily and categorically dismiss Hume's dictum on reason being the slave of the passions as "simple minded," while Locke does only a trifle better as a believer in "the old tacit assumption of an identity of soul and mind." Indeed, the British empiricists fare less well at Arendt's hands than at those of her master, Kant.

The work is really consecrated to Kant, for her divisions of thinking, willing, and judging derive in great measure from Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason, Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals,* and *Critique of Judgment.* From the transcendental dialectic of the *Critique of Pure Reason* she drew the cardinal lesson: the insolubility of the nature of providence, freedom, and immortality by speculative thought. But what is so unusual about Arendt's work is that it infuses Kant's deadly logical prose with the excitement of Hegel's dialectical scaffold. Whether by intent or accident—and to know Hannah Arendt and her work is to know that scarcely a word, much less a concept, happens randomly—Kant is given the ultimate victory in the classical philosophic struggle. This is no cheap victory, but a victory over titans like Plato and Hegel. For Arendt, Kant gives us conscience as a realm of freedom unto itself: he understands that judgment is something that can be practiced but not taught; and it is Kant who sits astride the will, uniquely understanding it as neither freedom of choice nor sheer spontaneity of activity. Kant's will becomes Arendt's will, "delegated by reason to be its executive organ in all matters of conduct." Karl Popper's proponents of the closed society (Plato and Hegel) now meet their match in Arendt's proponent of the open society (Kant).

Arendt points to a great divide in modern scientific quests: on the one hand is the positivist quest for truth, and on the other is the rationalist quest for meaning. For her, it is a basic fallacy to confound the two, a fallacy to which even figures like Heidegger fall prey. The distinction between the urgent need to think and the desire to know is an operational way of distinguishing thinking from doing. And here, although the Greeks are called upon to bear witness to this distinction, I dare say it is Arendt's Jewishness that provides the missing link. For it is the historical role of the

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Jews to search and not find redemption and the redeemer, in contrast to the truth announced by Christianity of redemption through the Son of God, that really distinguishes Arendt's claims for thinking as the ultimate act.

There is a strange myopia in Arendt, an all-too-conventional vision of the history of philosophy as a movement from the Greeks to the Romans to the Christians to the Medieval schoolmen, and finally to the Germans. But such a mechanical rendition of the history of philosophy fails to explain why Heidegger the existentialist falls prey to the same error as Carnap the positivist. Why does the metaphysical impulse to certainty take precedence over epistemological distinctions? Is not the answer at least in part located in a shared scientific vision of the age in which the quest for meaning is seen as less urgent than the delivery of truth, even the imposition of truth on nonbelievers, infidels, and heathens? Perhaps in the third volume on judgment such matters would have been addressed. I suspect otherwise. Having rejected the philosophic dialogue written by opponents of the open society, Arendt was powerless to cope with the betrayal of that life in its post-Kantian phase. The elementary forms of democratic expression are described as in mortal combat with the evolutionary Nazi and historical Bolshevik forms of anti-democracy. The allies of the demos are left disarmed, so to speak, wrecked by intellectuals announcing the death of intellect.

There was a point when one would have had to shuffle in embarrassment for reviewing a metaphysical work. But with figures such as Marx, Durkheim, and Weber anchoring major tendencies, no apologetics for reading such a masterful treatise is required, nor need it be hidden under sociological pillows. To be sure, those who represent phenomenological, symbolic interactionist, and humanistic varieties of sociology will probably be far more attracted to this pair of volumes than will advocates of behavioral, functional, or physicalist sociologies. But to disentangle a potential audience for such an undertaking is aptly evocative of what Arendt understands as the topsy-turvy world of action and theory:

> The Marxian and existentialist notions, which play such a great role in twentieth-century thought and pretend that man is his own producer and maker, rest on these experiences, even though it is clear that nobody has 'made' himself or 'produced' his existence; this, I think, is the last of the metaphysical fallacies, corresponding to the modern age's emphasis on willing as a substitute for thinking. . . .And this is of some relevance to a whole set of problems by which modern thought is haunted. . . .Since Hegel and Marx, these questions have been treated in the perspective of History and on the assumption that there is such a thing as Progress of the human race. Finally. . .the only alternative there is in these matters—we either can say with Hegel:

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> *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*, leaving the ultimate judgment to Success, or we can maintain with Kant the autonomy of the minds of men and their possible independence of things as they are or as they have come into being.

As long as thinking, willing, and judging are viewed as three basic mental activities that "cannot be derived from each other" and that "cannot be reduced to a common denominator," the very edifice Arendt attempts is subject to the same criticism as any other absolutism. In twentieth-century terms, her work consecrates the collapse of acceptable paradigms in social science and philosophy. Hence the trinitarianism of thinking, willing, and judging can do no more than confront itself in field after field, discipline after discipline. But if Arendt did not effect the grand synthesis, she sheds much light on what ails our social and behavioral disciplines. We at least know what the sources of division are with a precision and a clarity that make possible new creativity. And that is ultimately what the life of the free mind is all about.

It is ironic that the author of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* should also be a supreme devotee of German high culture. For there can be no mistaking that in philosophy, law, and politics, Hannah Arendt was a complete product of the German *Aufklärung*. The century has been rolled back with these volumes—as if Hitler and Nazism had not happened, as if German liberal thought were an unbroken chain of continuities. But this is not the case. Arendt in her towering works has been a prime mover in enabling us to understand the essence of the totalitarian persuasion. But at the end, she remained true to the tradition of German liberalism. The French language, which she loved, counted for little more than a Cartesian footnote, and the English constitutional tradition, which surely nourished her faith in compassionate justice over and against impassioned (nonrational) vengeance, counted more as sentiment than as structure. Russian democratic thought from Herzen to Solzhenitsyn scarcely existed for her. And perhaps most shattering to those who saw her primarily as a Jewish writer, the Hebrew tradition was reduced to several hyphenated footnotes to Christian theology. In the end, in the long pull, this remarkable woman, scholar, critic, exile, and teacher turned out to be not an avenging angel remorselessly pursuing her totalitarian quarry but the last loving product of German Enlightenment: the keeper of a flame she herself had helped resurrect from the charnelhouse of postwar Europe. The dialectical process is indeed mysterious and insoluble, as Kant insisted. It brought forth, fifty years late in a foreign language by an exile from Nazi repression, the last hurrah of Weimar democracy.

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JEFFREY HERF

Striking a Balance: Remembering 1968 and After

Tomorrow is my fifty-first birthday. From the perspective of this advanced age, five years is a very short time. But the five years between 1965 and 1970 felt like a very long time indeed. I joined the New Left early enough to have strong ties to its anti-authoritarian, culturally anarchic, highly intellectual period and yet was still young and very involved when it turned towards Marxist-Leninist vanguards, authoritarian and totalitarian politics, anti-intellectualism, and violence. I stepped back from the maelstrom and, unlike some New Left friends, survived with mind and body intact. The issue of how the New Left moved from Port Huron to Weatherman, and how it self-destructed, has preoccupied historians of the period. For me this is less a matter of historical scholarship than bittersweet memory of the breaks and continuities between 1968 and the radical Left of 1969 and the early 1970s.

In 1968, I had been in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) for three years, having joined as a freshman at Grinnell College when we traveled to Washington, DC for the second national demonstration against the war in Vietnam in October of 1965. After I transferred to the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the fall of 1966, I continued to participate in SDS, but, even more importantly, in the remarkable intellectual Left, especially among historians, in Madison of those years. The liberal faculty who were close to the New Left included William A. Williams, William Taylor, Robert Starobin, Haavey Goldberg, and Richard Hamilton (now the director of the Center for European Studies at Ohio State University). Two German refugee scholars, the sociologist Hans Gerth, and the European cultural and intellectual historian George Mosse were most important for me.

Many scholars, including some prominent scholars and intellectuals who were then graduate students and undergraduates, emerged from Madison's intellectual hothouse. The ones I knew included Jessica Benjamin, Paul Breines, Wini Breines, Paul Buhle, John Cumbler, John Coatsworth, Stuart Ewen, Elizabeth Ewen, Ann Gordon, Russell Jacoby,

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David Levine, Ronald Radosh, Lloyd Gardner, Anson Rabinbach, Joan Scott, Charles Sowerwine, and Dale Tomich. *Connections* was the underground newspaper (launched by Bob Gabriner, a veteran of the civil rights movement in the South) in which Stuart Ewen brought some of the complexities of Marcuse's book *One-Dimensional Man* to the level of the student masses. This was a bookish group. People enjoyed reading and discussing books that were not required for class. I recall that Wini and Elizabeth Ewen had a women's reading group that worked through Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* while we boys pondered what Herbert Marcuse meant by "repressive desublimation" in his book *Eros and Civilization*. The campus daily paper, *The Daily Cardinal,* was also distinguished, astute, and very literate. Its liberal—that is, firmly to the right of the New Left—editors included Jeff Greenfield, now of ABC-TV News, and Joel Brenner, now a senior partner of his own Washington law firm. My leftism was shaped by the values of my liberal Jewish family and community in Milwaukee, and refined by reading and studying, especially in European intellectual history, particularly German philosophy and social theory from Kant and Hegel to Marx, then Lukacs, Freud, and Marcuse, followed by the then less well-known—in this country—thinkers of the Frankfurt School: Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin, and Franz Neumann.

In both Europe and the United States, the Frankfurt School, particularly Marcuse, has been both criticized for laying the basis for subsequent leftist terrorism and defended as a theorist of an anti-authoritarian left utterly at odds with communist vanguards. For me, Marcuse's work had both effects. On the one hand, critical theory meant that the vision of a better society should be prefigured in the way a social movement behaves and that social change requires individual autonomy and rationality. Both of these assertions precluded any return to Marxism-Leninism and certainly to Stalinism or a new cult of personality. On the other hand, for me—and I know this was also the case for other SDS members who had one foot in the intellectual early days and another in the maelstrom of 1968-1970—even this "anti-authoritarian" Marxism contained seeds of a different kind of left, one in which the authoritarian and violent vanguards appeared to be a logical extension of some of these ideas. Central to the continuity of 1968 to 1969 was the conviction that the great mass of the population in the advanced capitalist societies suffered from "false" or "one-dimensional" consciousness, defined happiness as the satisfaction of false and distorted needs, was profoundly racist, and was therefore highly unlikely, barring a renewed economic catastrophe, to ever turn to a socialist alternative.

Experience appeared to reinforce theory as the white New Left based in the universities found common cause at home with first the civil rights

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movement and then black radicalism of the late 1960s—most importantly the Black Panther Party—and with what we called "third-world national liberation struggles," but lacked significant support in what had been the Left's traditional base in the working class. (George Wallace's surprisingly strong showing in the spring 1968 presidential primaries in Wisconsin, including support in a resentment-laden, lower middle-class constituency, appeared to confirm these perceptions and fears). Both Marcuse's argument about the vanguard nature of rebellious youth and then notions of a "new working class" being trained in the universities suggested that we—the student left—were in the process of becoming a new revolutionary subject replacing that of the irredeemably falsely conscious working classes.

The intellectual legacy of New Left Marxism gave us the sense that we possessed the truth, that we were the representatives of Reason with a capital "R" and Morality with a capital "M" and that as a result of this extreme self-confidence those who disagreed with us were hopelessly mistaken or simply immoral. Hence, as Marcuse argued in an influential essay on "repressive tolerance," under certain circumstances radical political change required that toleration be denied to those deemed racist, imperialist or generally reactionary. From New Left theory but also from our anger at both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations regarding civil rights and especially the war in Vietnam, the New Left by the mid-1960s had a well-developed antagonism to liberals (recall Phil Ochs, "Love Me I'm a Liberal") and liberalism. Finally, I recall "anti-anticommunism." We argued that anti-communism was an effective tool of displacing anger onto an external enemy but lacked substance in fact. To criticize communism sharply was to give aid and comfort to the powers that be. Different people took this melange in different directions but when some of the smartest—not only the dumbest—people in SDS joined Weatherman they could rightly claim to have wound up there by pushing elements of New Left thinking to a logical though evil and crazy direction. As a result, I have thought then and since that the continuities before and after 1968 were as, if not more, important than the breaks, and that the decade ought not be divided into the good and the bad years with 1968 as the clear turning point.

One of my fondest memories dates from 1966-1967 in Madison when the Wisconsin Draft Resistance Union, or WDRU, was founded. Encouraged by Stokley Carmichael's and, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC) urging to refuse induction, a small group of, as I recall, less than twenty people signed and published the first "We Won't Go" statement in *The Daily Cardinal* early in 1967. In April 1967, along with 120 other young men, I signed the second "We Won't Go" statement. The statement declared:

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WE WON'T GO

> We the undersigned men of draft age wish to announce that we refuse to be drafted into the United States Armed Forces. By withholding our participation we are saying "No" to the continuing barbarism of the Vietnam War. We are responsible for our actions. We openly say "No" to conscripted military service. Our refusal to participate in the madness of the Vietnam War in no way implies a renunciation of our country. Our act of refusal is in fact an act of loyalty because it aims at redeeming rather than smothering human potential here in the United States and around the world. We are taking this stand both to assert our personal integrity and self-respect, and to try to stem the kind of assumptions and policies exemplified by the Vietnam War. We urge all young men of draft age who can conscientiously do so, to assume responsibility for their lives and to join us in this stand.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO STAND ALONE

Of the many statements I signed, leaflets I wrote, or speeches I delivered in those years, this simultaneous expression of loyalty, conscience, and disobedience is the one of which I am most proud. I framed it and through the many moves of academic life it has hung in my study for most of the past thirty years. It stood in contrast to the manifestos of 1968-1970 in its use of clear, grammatically correct American English; it eschewed the discourse about imperialism and national liberation struggles, and did not support the other side. On the other hand, the statement was a product of New Left anti-anticommunism. It contained no criticism of the North Vietnamese Communists or of the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam. Yet we were more opposed to what the United States was doing in Vietnam than we were explicitly in favor of a Communist victory. Moral protest rooted in liberal values, more than explicit Marxism-Leninism or even romance about third-world armed struggles, accurately describes my own—and I think a majority of the signers'—state of mind in 1967.

Some commentators, taking note of how much the antiwar movement declined after the draft was replaced with a lottery, have stressed the element of self-interest in the draft resistance movement. This point about self-interest divorced from political and moral convictions is a valid one but it applies less to us signers of the "We Won't Go" statements than to almost all of the draft-age young men of the American middle and upper classes. (The war was fought overwhelmingly by the white working class and non-white minorities). In fact, with only few exceptions, the entire American middle class avoided the draft. These silent resisters included the

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entire current baby-boom leadership of the Republican Party (except for Senator John McCain) in both houses of Congress.

(At the same time, spring-summer 1967, the New Left received a jolt when the Six Day War broke out. A split opened up between Jewish and non-Jewish supporters of Israel and an increasingly anti-Israeli current in the Left. Combined with the black-Jewish tensions that broke out in the New York City teachers' strike in 1968, this split became increasingly bitter and was one source of the emergence of intellectual neo-conservatism in the 1970s and 1980s. As important as this issue was in the United States, it was even more so for the West German New Left.)

In Madison, the defining moment of the sixties Left took place on October 18, 1967 when five hundred or so of us in the core of the radical Left blocked the entry of fellow students seeking job interviews with the Dow Chemical company, then infamous for producing napalm for the war. In the indiscriminate way in which it literally covered and stuck to anything and then burned it in the most agonizing manner, napalm crystallized in our minds the barbarism of the American war. The police, in order to evict us from the building and open access to the job interviews, entered the building. I still vividly recall the sound of smashing glass, of clubs landing on bodies, people screaming, fights, epithets, and then the smell of tear gas directed at a crowd of thousands that had gathered outside. Seventy-five people were taken to the hospital with a variety of injuries—mostly demonstrators, but also several policemen who were quite seriously injured. Nothing was the same in Madison after the Dow demonstration. The intellectual life, the reading groups, and the journals continued, of course, but the movement became bigger, younger, less intellectual, and increasingly anti-intellectual, more macho and angrier.

The Tet Offensive of January 1968 was in our view the most dramatic demonstration that history was moving in the direction of the revolutionary Left; that, as the communists used to say, "the correlation of forces" had shifted in favor of world revolution. I believe that for the history of SDS and the New Left as a whole around the world, Tet was the decisive causal event of 1968; the event from which all the others flowed, from Columbia in April to Paris in May, was the Tet Offensive of January. No matter that in military terms, Tet was a defeat for the National Liberation Front and North Vietnamese armies. The appearance to us—and to leftists around the world—was that the most powerful military machine in the world had, however briefly, been thrown on the defensive. Hence actual defeat became a symbolic victory. The Pentagon and White House claims of light at the end of the tunnel became objects of ridicule. For both communists and the New Left in Europe, Japan, Latin America, and the United States, Tet meant that the United States was not only

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bad, but now vulnerable. Che Guevara's call for "two, three, many Vietnams," the diffusion of Mao Tse-Tung's assertions that American imperialism was a "paper tiger," and the willingness in the New Left to publicly chant "Ho-Ho-Ho Chi Minh, the NLF is going to win"—all testified to this belief that the wind indeed was blowing in the direction of revolution.

In spring 1968, many of us in the New Left moved from anti-anti-communism to active support for the other side, or what we called support for national liberation struggles around the globe and at home. In 1968 and 1969, the Black Panther Party became a leading point of reference for white radicals thinking about race and racism. The Panthers spoke the language of Marxism-Leninism, adopted an authoritarian organization, denounced the police as "pigs" and non-violence as a bourgeois hang-up of "jive-assed intellectuals." They had a profound influence on the willingness of the white New Left to turn away from its anarchic, anti-authoritarian legacies, though it is important to remember that we felt common cause with them, and ever more so as prominent members of the Panther Party were killed, wounded, and imprisoned in confrontations with the police. Political activity in Madison in the spring was dense on all fronts, from organizing radical caucuses in the humanities and social sciences to running for student council on a platform of "student power," demonstrating at countless rallies against the war, and nurturing a counter-culture in the Miflin Street neighborhood of off-campus apartments. By the time we veterans of the Dow demonstration came to demonstrate at the Democratic convention in Chicago in August 1968, "tear gas" and "affinity group" had become familiar parts of our vocabulary.

Following Tet, Columbia 1968, the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy, and then the urban riots of spring and summer 1968, the division of labor between intellectuals and activists became increasingly tense both between different people and as conflicts within each of us seeking to balance thought and action. In the fall of 1968 I opposed the proposal of some newly arrived veterans from Columbia SDS to reproduce the Columbia strike in Madison by seizing buildings on or shortly before the presidential elections. The advocates of the takeover suggested the actual reason for my position was that I didn't want "to put my balls on the line." (This sexist discourse of masculine aggression and authenticity, along with attacks on us "jive-assed intellectuals"—historians of gender discourse should have, perhaps they already have had, a field day with the later New Left—became frequent as, in this new and harder time, political disagreement gave way to abuse.) As the revolutionary vanguard was obviously correct, disagreement was due to one reason above all: cowardice. The proposal to seize buildings was defeated. On election eve,

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ten thousand people marched in Madison to call for an immediate end to the war. Yet the process of internal factionalization and self-destruction of SDS was beginning and would leave the organization in shambles whenever larger numbers of people were looking for political leadership to the left of the Democratic Party.

The story of destruction and self-destruction from 1968 to 1970 has been oft-told. Here I want simply to amplify a point I made earlier. Yes, it is true: compared to the New Left leaders of the early and mid-1960s, the later leaders such as Bernadine Dohrn, Bob Avakian, Bill Ayers, Mike Klonsky, and Mark Rudd were intellectually crude. Yet, as Antonio Gramsci agonizingly acknowledged, when theory grips the masses, the results are often not particularly edifying. As anyone who has read the Weatherman manifesto of June 1960 will recognize, if this was anti-intellectualism, it was an anti-intellectualism of the intellectuals. Despite citing Bob Dylan's famous line, "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows," the Weatherman statement of June 1969, "Bring the War Home," along with the competing theories of the Maoist Progressive Labor Party and the orthodox Marxist Revolutionary Youth Movement II (RYM II) all assumed that you did indeed need the correct revolutionary theory to make the revolution. In the faction fight of spring 1969, SDS did not abandon theory for practice. It fell under the sway of bad, very bad ideas. Our earlier liberalism became a source of embarrassment (too wimpy, too moralistic, too petty-bourgeois, etc.) and too many of us were intellectually disarmed or at least vulnerable to the penetration of totalitarian ideas now emanating from the national organizations of the New Left. I looked on in disbelief as respected friends joined the Maoist Progressive Labor Party, cut their hair, quoted Mao's "Little Red Book," praised the Cultural Revolution in China and our own working class, and denounced us as petty-bourgeois students. Of the three main Marxist-Leninist vanguards of spring 1969—PL, RYM II and Weatherman—it was Weatherman's crazy blend of global Marxism-Leninism and solidarity with the Vietnamese and the Panthers linked to the American counter-culture that was closest to the spirit of 1968 and the sixties generally.

Add intense, self-righteous moralism to theoretical certainty and one has a mixture of virtue and terror that has been a strain of the revolutionary tradition since the Jacobins. The decisive advantage these new leaders and these Marxist-Leninist vanguards had over the rest of us was certainty, coherence, and possession of "a correct view on everything," as the philosopher Leszek Kolakowski put it so well in another context. Where once SDS and SNCC had been skeptical of leaders, now the worst fear of many was to be left, in Dylan's words, "out on your own, with no direction or home,"

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and thus in the dustbin of history. Both fear of and anger about repression (after Nixon's election in 1968 on a program of "law and order") as well as dreams of revolution gave the vanguards an opening. For these reasons among others, we failed to defeat the penetration of totalitarian ideology and organization in the New Left.

The last time I was together with Madison SDS was at the SDS National Convention in June 1969, shortly before I began an off-and-on two-year career as a taxi driver and part-time radical in New York. I cannot forget seeing members of Harvard SDS—dominated by the Maoist Progressive Labor Party—and of Columbia SDS—dominated by the emergent Weatherman—screaming in unison at one another. The Harvard chant was "Mao-Mao-Mao Tse-Tung, Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win." Columbia responded with "Ho-Ho-Ho Chi Minh, NLF is Gonna Win." In this age of discourse analysis, perhaps we should add to Marx's old materialist dictum that you are what you eat the idea that you become what you chant. I learned that even highly educated people, indeed perhaps especially highly educated people—including myself—can turn themselves into political zombies and close off their capacities for political judgment if they repeat slogans often enough.

After graduation, I drove a taxi in summer 1969 (I think I was getting lost in the Bronx when American astronauts landed on the moon) and continued to argue about the SDS faction fight with my friend and apartment mate, Mark Rosenberg. In late August, I returned from a visit home to see that Mark had invited the New York Weatherman collective to stay in our apartment following a meeting in Cleveland in which the organization made the decision to initiate a move towards building an armed underground organization. This, of course, is a long story and I mention it now to say that, faced with the opportunity to join Weatherman, I said no, though at the time I believed my decision was due as much to fear as to revulsion at this American totalitarianism. I never regretted saying no. But for the purposes of this gathering, it is important to note that one reason doing so was so difficult was that so many people in Weatherman were themselves veterans of 1968 and indeed of the early and middling years of the New Left. While it was always a fringe phenomenon in numbers, Weatherman was too closely linked to the spirit of 1968 to be dismissed as a repudiation of the 1960s or the New Left. Yes, it turned on parts of 1968, but the continuities were just as important.

In the New Left we talked a lot about assuming responsibility for our lives. No one forced me to remain involved in the SDS faction fight or to be tempted, however briefly, by Weatherman. True, I was only twenty-two, still in the process of working out my political convictions and eager to demonstrate that I was as tough as any of the other guys in SDS. But

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my own ideas and decisions led me close to the center of this maelstrom. I came away from it with a deep sense of my own fallibility (something that I think is indispensable for a democratic political culture) and concluded over a number of years that I had to rethink my beliefs. In time I returned to a chastened and sobered version of the liberalism that I brought to SDS in 1965.

The depth of these memories and the lessons I drew from the late 1960s gave my return to scholarship and to liberal values a special urgency and intensity. I and many others learned again that guilt, self-hatred, anti-intellectualism, celebration of violence, and crudity of speech and thought would never change any society for the better. I had seen that in confusing times, totalitarian ideologies with their claim of truth grasped by a self-appointed vanguard had a powerful appeal upon previously sensible people, and that the ability of ideology to interpret events is a powerful political force—and not simply a tool of prior interests. This conviction has profoundly influenced my thinking about twentieth-century German and European history. He or she who arrives on the scene with ready-made answers to complex questions, who speaks with an air of absolute certainty, who knows that history is on his or her side—in short the ideological fanatic and demagogue—has a great advantage over the great majority of us who see shades of gray, a bit of this and a bit of that, merit in one's own arguments but also at times in those of the opponent.

Most of my friends made it through all right, but not all. Bob Starobin committed suicide with a shotgun in early 1971, a week before I was planning to visit him near Binghamton, New York. Sylvia Baraldini, a friend from Madison days, kept going deeper into the radical underground in the 1970s, ending in her participation in the Brinks bank robbery in Nyack, New York in 1981 in which several policemen were killed. She is still in prison. Mark Rosenberg twice denounced my "non-struggle attitude," the second time when we were working on Panther defense in New York. But he stayed in Weatherman only a few months. In 1972 he moved to Hollywood where he joined leftist circles and became a spectacularly successful and very wealthy agent and then movie producer at Warner Brothers where he produced *The Fabulous Baker Boys.* I last saw him in 1970. In Hollywood, he was apparently living life in a very fast lane and died of a heart attack about five years ago. The rest of us survived and got on with our lives. For me, that meant understanding how all that could have happened, how I got so close to it all, and doing what I could as a scholar to sustain liberal values while preventing another relapse into totalitarian politics in this country.

No matter how hard I try, I cannot separate the good from the bad in my memories of 1968 and the New Left. They remain a source of pride as

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well as regret. Though communism in Vietnam, and elsewhere before that, has been a political and economic disaster, I remain proud that we in the New Left said publicly, before most of the country did that the war in Vietnam was a wrong and unnecessary war. To the extent to which our early opposition helped to raise the political cost of waging the war, we accomplished something positive. I think we did have something to do with making this a more just and tolerant and less racist society. The second wave of feminism and the gay movement both gained impetus from 1968 and they have fought a great fight to change this society immeasurably for the better. The values of economic and social equality, and of a more equal distribution of wealth and income that we advocated are especially necessary in our current gilded, and, as "welfare reform" is indicating, often cruel age. So I remain a child of the sixties in these many ways and am fortunate I came of age then.

By the early 1980s, I was ready to publicly criticize the Left in this country and in Western Europe as it opposed NATO's deployment of nuclear weapons. I believe that if the spirit of 1968 in foreign policy had prevailed then, the prospects for reform in the Soviet Union would have been reduced and the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact might still be with us. Where the Left of the 1930s and 1940s was proudly anti-fascist, the Left of the late 1980s still had difficulty grasping the need to confront fascism in the form of Saddam Hussein's aggression against Kuwait. In the 1990s, a sixties veteran as president did not make good on his campaign promises to intervene to stop mass murder in Bosnia—though another sixties veteran, then head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, opposed such intervention. It has been hard for many 68ers to grasp that some interventions of American power are essential for preserving the values we championed.

But at the age of fifty-one I want to say to the younger historians here who are and will be writing the history of our youthful years: pay attention to the dissenters, to those whose memories of 1968 do not always accord with the master narratives of heroism and profound insight. Do not dismiss the critics or abuse them, as some have, by calling them fanatics of another stripe. Do not be intimidated into avoiding controversial paths of research by efforts to discredit the messengers of dissonant memory. Remember that we in the New Left were all very young. At times we were very brave and politically astute and at other times we lacked good judgment and common sense. And often the same person could go from good to bad and back again in no time at all. Striking a balance between self-reflection on youthful blunders and youthful accomplishments is difficult both for a memorist and for historians. I think that is how it is and how it should remain.

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TERRY TEACHOUT

Dance Chronicle: Blasts from the Past

New York City Ballet is currently celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of its founding with a two-season-long review of its vast repertory, the bulk of which is by George Balanchine, the century's greatest choreographer, and Jerome Robbins, the first important American-born classical choreographer. The programs have been mostly splendid—one can scarcely go near the New York State Theater without seeing a gem or two on display—and whatever one thinks of the overall state of the company these days (and opinions vary sharply, especially among New York's more outspoken dance critics), the solo dancing is often spectacular.

NYCB has also been presenting an assortment of more recent ballets, some by Peter Martins, Balanchine's successor as ballet master in chief, and others by lesser figures variously associated with the company. These range in style from Richard Tanner's comfortably derivative "Variations on a Nursery Song" to William Forsythe's determinedly postmodern "Herman Schmerman"; as for Martin's own efforts, they wander all over the stylistic map, though never straying far from the gospel according to Balanchine, whose neoclassicization of the movement vocabulary of nineteenth-century ballet remains central to the company's esthetic. Indeed, these widely varied works have only one thing in common: most of them aren't very good.

Regular balletgoers are all too aware of the difficulty Martins has had in adding works of lasting interest to the company's repertory. He has, to be sure, made many dances in his sixteen years at the helm, and commissioned nearly as many more. A not-inconsiderable number of these works have been taken into NYCB's working repertory and are revived at regular intervals, just as if they were by Balanchine or Robbins. Yet with rare exceptions, they have proved to be forgettable, though the fact that the company continues to dance them means they are by definition impossible to forget. As it happens, some of Martins's own exercises in dramatic abstraction have been genuinely striking; "Poulenc Sonata" (1985), for instance, is a work of real quality, as was last year's "River of Light." Others, though, are downright embarrassing ("Stabat Mater" is now known to irreverent balletomanes as "Stab Your Mother"), while most, including "Walton Cello Concerto," premiered in January, are competent but uninteresting.

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There would be nothing surprising about this state of affairs—most new art is uninteresting—were it not that nobody else is having much better luck than Martins. San Francisco Ballet, which is led by a New York City Ballet alumnus, Helgi Tomasson, came to New York last fall for a short season during which it performed, along with Balanchine's "Agon" and Robbins's "The Cage," a half-dozen dances by Tomasson, not one of which was worth seeing; such new European classical choreography as has made its way to New York of late has also tended to be uninspired at best, frankly trashy at worst. The awful truth is that since Robbins died last summer, there seems not to be a single first-rate classical choreographer left anywhere in the world.

This is not to say that interesting new ballets aren't being made, merely that they aren't being made by classical choreographers. Mark Morris, for instance, has made several works for San Francisco Ballet, all of them impressive; last November, American Ballet Theatre premiered a new ballet by Twyla Tharp, "Known by Heart," which was generally thought to be outstanding, not least because it provided Ethan Stiefel, the phenomenal young virtuoso who defected to ABT from NYCB two years ago, with the first custom-made vehicle for his wonderfully bold style. (For my own part, I found "Known by Heart" to be garrulous and self-conscious, Stiefel's jazzy solo excepted, but mine was decidedly a minority view.) But Morris is a modern-dance choreographer who dabbles in ballet, and Tharp, though she converted to classicism (of a sort) in mid-life, also started out on the other side of the great divide, which is where most of her best dances were made.

To examine the modern-dance scene as a whole, in fact, is to encounter a distinctly higher level of creative energy. Paul Taylor is now producing one or two striking dances each season, some of which, "Evensong" and "Piazzolla Caldera" in particular, look very much like masterpieces of permanent interest; Merce Cunningham, too, has continued working in the face of advancing age and increasing infirmity, though it has been a while since he made anything that seemed likely to last. Mark Morris, who turns forty-three this fall, appears to have hit his stride: everything he turns out nowadays is at least interesting to look at, and sometimes quite remarkable indeed, as in the case of the powerfully expressive "Rhymes With Silver," set to the music of Lou Harrison. (Morris's New York appearances, alas, are comparatively infrequent, and so it often takes a season or two—sometimes more—before his dances are seen here.) And the ever-reliable artistic directors of Pilobolus Dance Theatre are also regularly creating attractive new works.

But this creative energy is not matched by a comparable degree of institutional health. Except for the biggest and most solidly established

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franchises, the Taylors and Piloboluses and Aileys, modern dance is not attracting a numerically significant audience anymore: it has gone back to the lofts. Some troupes, particularly the Martha Graham company, are known to be struggling, and many more suffer in silence, though their financial troubles are no secret in the chatty world of dance (you hear quickly when a small company stops meeting its payroll). Even Twyla Tharp, who not so long ago was one of the strongest draws in dance, has given up trying to run a full-time company, apparently for good; she now puts together *ad hoc* troupes for specific projects, and makes a ballet every year for ABT.

What is happening here? The trouble with modern dance, as I see it, is that its pioneers failed to think through the fundamental issues of institutional survival. They all made up their own non-interchangeable movement vocabularies, putting together small companies designed to perform only their own work; when they died, their companies died with them, or shrank to insignificance. It is revealing that not until Mikhail Baryshnikov put together the White Oak Dance Project, a part-time troupe whose success is a direct function of his celebrity, did anyone make any kind of serious attempt to create a modern-dance repertory company.

Conversely, classical ballet has always been first and foremost an institutional art. Unlike the myriad dialects of modern dance, the classical language is for all intents and purposes universal, which is why the Paris Opera Ballet's Isabelle Guerin can appear without difficulty as a guest star with New York City Ballet (as she did throughout the season just past, to delicious effect). In this respect, ballet companies are more like symphony orchestras than modern-dance troupes. Most American companies have in their working repertories an assortment of "standard" ballets, the same way most American orchestras play the fifty famous classics. The same is true of contemporary works: Balanchine's ballets, radically innovative though they are, can nonetheless be executed by any reasonably proficient classical company, and the Balanchine Trust readily makes them available to interested companies capable of meeting its technical standards and willing to comply with its rehearsal requirements.

The more interesting question is not why classical companies are more stable than modern-dance troupes, but why there are at present no first-rate classical choreographers. Theories abound, many of them suggestive but none completely convincing. My own guess—again, one not yet generally shared by other critics—is that a hundred years from now, classical ballet's major phase will be seen to have *started* with George Balanchine, rather than ending with him. Before Balanchine, ballet was, in W. H. Auden's words, a very minor art form: you can count the number of still-viable nineteenth-century classics virtually on the fingers of one hand,

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while the repertory of Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, by far the most influential company of the first half of the twentieth century, has largely disintegrated. In retrospect, it seems clear that it was Balanchine who forged out of the technical language of classical ballet an esthetic sufficiently rich in implication to serve as the basis for future stylistic evolution. His oldest surviving dance, "Apollo," dates from 1928, and is still being performed. Of how many other ballets made in that year—indeed, in that entire decade—can the same be said?

If I am right, then presumably it will take a certain amount of time before a new generation of choreographers, trained in Balanchine's techniques and familiar with his ballets but uninhibited by the memory of his personal presence (he died in 1983), starts to produce works that descend from Balanchine without imitating him. These choreographers will undoubtedly also be informed by modern dance, and especially by those modern-dance choreographers, in particular Taylor, Tharp and Morris, who have been willing to work with classical companies. But the ballets they make, however "modern" their flavor, will nonetheless be firmly and explicitly rooted in the classical tradition, not because it is the only valid way to dance—many of the greatest dancers of the past quarter-century have come from modern companies—but because it so far appears to be the only practical basis for the establishment of institutionally stable companies capable of preserving their repertories over the long haul.

The flaw in this theory is obvious: where *are* all these young classical choreographers? And the reply, though no less obvious—they should be coming along any time now—is inevitably unsatisfying. New York City Ballet has lately produced one promising young choreographer, Christopher Wheeldon, who to date has shown two ballets in New York, "Slavonic Dances" (made for NYCB) and "Souvenirs" (made for the School of American Ballet, NYCB's sister institution), plus a pas de deux set to Ravel's "Pavane pour une infante defunte." But three promising dances do not a style make, and though Wheeldon is currently at work on a Stravinsky ballet scheduled to be premiered in May, it is far too soon to say how good he is. Other names come to mind, Kevin O'Day, Septime Webre and Jimmy Gamonet de los Heros among them, but their work is not now being seen regularly in the dance capital of the world, and so one must take their gifts largely on faith.

In the meantime, there are always the classics and neoclassics, though we don't see nearly as many of these as we ought to. Kevin McKenzie, who runs American Ballet Theatre, apparently prefers mounting expensive-looking borrowed productions of kitschy story ballets by Ben Stevenson and his ilk to the less glamorous but far more challenging task of reviving such older, rarely seen works as, say, Antony Tudor's "Romeo and Juliet"

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or Sir Frederick Ashton's "Symphonic Variations." (ABT has also become by default the principal American repository for the nineteenth-century full-evening classics, but that is another story.) The Joffrey Ballet, which used to present a remarkably wide cross-section of twentieth-century ballets, has retired to Chicago and is now on life support; San Francisco Ballet and Pacific Northwest Ballet rarely get to New York, while Miami City Ballet, arguably the country's best Balanchine company after NYCB, never dances here at all.

And—ever and always—there is New York City Ballet itself, which for all its undeniable weaknesses remains the most important of dance companies, and in many ways the most satisfying. Certainly the fiftieth-anniversary season has offered more than its share of delights. So far this year, New Yorkers have reveled in one indisputably major event, the long-awaited revival of Balanchine's intensely romantic "Liebeslieder Walzer," which henceforth should be done *at least* every couple of years. As for the dancing, it will be a long time before I forget the exquisitely self-effacing clarity that Kyra Nichols, the company's senior ballerina, brought to the pas de deux of Robbins' "In G Major," or the night that Monique Meunier, newly promoted to principal dancer last November, tore through the gypsy finale of Balanchine's "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet" as though the very stage itself had been set ablaze.

To be sure, NYCB is trying to put on too many ballets for its own good. Some looked appallingly messy ("Bournonville Divertissements" was an alarming case in point), while others were perversely cast (Nilas Martins, Peter's son, has no business dancing Apollo), in part because of the sharply increased number of injuries caused by the scheduling of underrehearsed works. Still, no other company is capable of presenting so many great ballets in so short a span of time, and if it is indeed true that the future of classical ballet begins with George Balanchine, then surely it is valuable that as the century draws to a close, we should be given the opportunity to look at as many of his dances as possible. Who knows what budding young choreographer—or critic—saw "Symphony in C" or "The Four Temperaments" for the first time this year, and marveled anew at the sight? Where there are masterpieces, there is hope.

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AESCHYLUS

Eumenides' Chorus, from *The Oresteia*

A man in his splendour
Is like the sun.
But when the blood from someone he has killed
Spills into his conscience
He sinks into the black clouds of our tatters.
Then the living blood that beats in the head
Is the drum of vengeance.
His own hand, darkened by blood,
Covers his eyes.
His brain whirls in darkness.
Voices of the dead
Deepen his voice as he groans.

Law is everlasting
And we are the everlasting
Enforcers of the law.
We are hated.
But the law cannot bend or renounce its course.
The other gods keep to the bright air.
They steer clear of the dark
And rocky track down which we drive the living and the dead.

We have declared who we are
And what our duties are,
Obedient to fate.
We are to be feared and revered
And though we sleep
In the blindest cavern of earth
In the blink of an eye we are with you.

Translated from the Greek by Ted Hughes

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AGHA SHAHID ALI

Ghazal

—for Hayden Carruth

The Belovéd will leave you behind from the start.
Light is difficult: one must be blind from the start.

You begin to feel better when the clocks are set back?
Child of northern darkness—so defined from the start.

Between two snow-heavy boughs, perhaps a bright star?
Or in one sparkling many stars combined from the start?

Ontological episode? God doesn't care.
"That is why he exists," you divined from the start.

Solomon's throne was a toy, his judgment mere talk—
Only our sins must be enshrined from the start.

Poet, tell me again how the white heron rises.
For the spirit, they say, is confined from the start.

To *What is mind?* we swiftly answer *O, no matter!*
Those who know matter never mind from the start.

Will the middle class give up its white devotions?
Feed their infants cayenne and tamarind from the start.

I am mere dust. The desert hides itself in me.
Against me the ocean has reclined from the start.

Who but Satan can know God's sorrow in Heaven?
God longs for *the* lover He undermined from the start.

"But I / am here in this real life / that I was given. . . ."
To what else should we be resigned from the start?

You have dwelt at the root of a scream forever—
The Forever Shahid's countersigned from the start.

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ALIKI BARNSTONE

The Irises of the Midwest.

In winter, sun is a crab burning
Through black tree lace as the strict god
Of country churches breathes in a headful
Of ice. Snowy restraint. Yet spring's
A stain of iris beds that can't
Be washed from the linens. Then sky
Shrinks into a malevolent
Blue eye as sinful petals bloom.

ALAN DIXON

A Small Black Cloud

As I open the curtains black clouds are parading
across the first daylight and a black gull is gliding.
It disappears in a wisp of assimilating
cloud. Surely it was a gull. I could not mistake it,
that easy flight so much a part of the winter sky,
but think when I must go what an easy way to die,
just lost in a dawn wind, no funeral expenses.
I'd like my lines to be left, but no other chances
beyond I was going to say "the grave." What "beyond"
has that? Who would not rather be slipped in a smooth wind?
And who needed a witness to the loss of his life
but a vengeful ghost? That gull thought nothing of it, grief
was not what it required, but in my lines I notice
creatures don't die properly, avoid termination;
however tidy I'd like things to be, they mention
themselves, the dead, and sometimes it looks as if malice
keeps them going, flying like part of a winter wind,
or kindness, briefly condensing into a small cloud.

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PAUL VERLAINE

Allegory

Despotic Summer, heavy, colorless—
Like king presiding tortures, fey, effete—
Yawns, stretches in the scheming skies' pale heat;
Man sleeps the sleep of labor's sweet recess.

The lark lay hushed: too tiring her distress.
No cloud, no breath of air: a calm complete.
No wrinkle in the sky's relentless sheet
Of blue, seething in torpor's mute caress.

The crickets, numbed to lethargy, are lying
Still. In their pebbled beds the brooklets, drying,
Billow and bound about no more. A flowing,

Ebbing of opalescence flecks the air,
Shimmering in its iridescence, glowing. . .
Black, yellow dragonflies dart here, dart there.

Circumspection

Give me your hand, hold still your breath, let's sit
Beneath this great tree, where the dusk-gray air
Wafts sighing, dying in the boughs, and where
The pale leaves softly stir, caressed, moon-lit.

Motionless, let us bow our heads and quit
All thought. Let's dream our dream, let's leave to their
Devices joy and love—windswept—like hair
Breeze-blown, brushed by the owl's wing grazing it.

Let us not even hope. In quiet peace
Let our two souls mirror the day's surcease
And the sun's death in night, tranquil and deep.

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In silence let us rest, calm, resolute:
It is not right to trouble, in his sleep,
Nature, that fearsome god, ferocious, mute.

Translated from the French by Norman Shapiro

LUCIANO ERBA

The Ibis and the Crocodile

The story's famous, and its moral obvious.
The wolf was howling because of a bone
stuck in his throat and badly turned,
but when a crane came to help him
and free it with his beak, it was for what purpose?
"Just be satisfied," says the wolf, "to leave
with your head on your neck and let it be!"
The authors agree about the wolf.
But that other creature with the beak?
Only Phaedrus says it is a crane;
Aesop speaks of a heron
and La Fontaine, instead, of a stork.
Disagreement, then, and uncertain sources
brought indifference into nature's frame.
The sense of landscape became almost nil.
You know the wolf will head towards the forest,
while the environment of each wader
with a long neck and slender legs—
be it a plover, a coot, or a snipe—
is a scene of slimy water and air
whether it's a pond, cane field, or marsh.
I conclude that it's like this.
It's time for the wolf to leave the *fable*
and return to his woods, leaving space in the scene
for the alternate—a more voracious beast,
that is, in terms of the swamp. You may have already
intuited that the crocodile is evil.

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The pleasing Nile-ish site
would be the delta's branch, a little bit hidden
(note Moses was saved from the water)
by reeds, mud, and far flamingoes.
The loricate wails; an ibis appears
and takes a pensive peck at our beast.
At this point, should I be wasting ink?
Let the fable continue; I won't expand it.
It's enough to have created a hieroglyph.

Translated from the Italian by Ann Snodgrass

SÁNDOR CSOÓRI

In Filtered Shade

Who are those well-groomed beer drinkers
under the huge sun umbrella
there in the garden above Pasaret?
On their necks, thick, hammered gold necklaces,
and their hairy fingers,
like fat bumblebees,
flutter lazily
above the glasses.

Unknown, like little Columbuses,
who have each just recently
discovered
a land swimming in haze
with banana plantations,
with green apples,
with ant farms,
and they already ship formic acid by the barrel
to armies secretly arming themselves.
Or they trade women for classical ruins
at bargain prices.

In the filtered shade and in the gray
cigarette smoke they are like those
who can see without eyes,

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who can hear without ears,
and who can feel with their slumbering temple-veins:
where pearls roll from the seas
and blood from the tapped bodies.

Borders? Borders? Torturing dispersals?
Poor hymns, homelessly hiding?
And the wild, pacing falcons
on Bartok's nearby statue-head
seem to them as distant as the flutist of death.

Leaning against a tree, I'm watching
their bumblebee fingers flitting in the afternoon.
I can see they own
this day, as well as the sky.
Who can say it's not the hearts
of my new torturers growing stronger in them?

Translated from the Hungarian by Len Roberts and Mária Szende

REBECCA SEIFERLE

Welcome to Ithaca

Since "metaphor" derives from transferring
a burden from one to the other, it
was clear, then, from the beginning,
that blood-drenched hall, that it would be easier
to silence pleas for mercy
if heard as the unintelligible
chirping of birds—easier
to string servant girls up like pigeons.
So, Odysseus' heart was a 'dog,' its hackles
rising when he saw the women caught up
in the suitors' arms, someone else's pets,
and only in a dream did Penelope weep
for *her* slaughtered geese, their soft white strewn
round the water trough. When Telemachus strung
a wire between two trees and began hanging
the servant women, one by one, noosing

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them in a line, the dying women
were described as thrushes spreading their wings,
doves or larks caught in a spring.
They were killed as a flock of birds, as undeserving
of the death of a single human being.
Though, first, in a colder, waking moment, the undisguised
Odysseus ordered the women to remove the corpses
from the great hall, to stack their lovers
in the yard. One cradling each beloved head,
another clutching at the feet,
the women became mere things—
their flesh a rag for scouring the furniture,
trying to scrub clear the appalling
table. Their last task
before being strangled—to dispose
of the earth itself, the blood-soaked floor
that Telemachus meticulously cut out,
so in the future—that narrow corridor
down which so many would be driven—a visitor
would not know she was invited into
a charnel house.

ANNIE FINCH

Landing Under Water, I See Roots

—for Rita Dove

All the things we hide in water
hoping we won't see them go—
(forests fallen under water
press against the ones we know)—

and they might have gone on growing
and they might now breathe above
everything I speak of sowing
(everything I try to love).

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Forests growing under water
loom as if there were no plan,
open leaves over the water,
stand up where I want to stand.

WILLIS BARNSTONE

I'm dumb and happy

I'm dumb and happy since I imagine that I'm
a heretic, yet I'm not at all sure

what a heretic is. I dodge outside time,
talking to Mitsos the baker about his loafs

of long night on this Meltemi island, of sins
I repeat, causing pain, of the Cycladic goat

shed I've earned. The old sick priest and his mad
daughter sing
weakly in Sunday morning chapel. Miserable angels.
I hum off key,

safe on the tiny floor of my outrageous being.

Sadness is a form of exultation

Sadness is a form of exultation. I swallow it. It blows
in like Gobi sand scratching my eyes

as I ride my Flying Pigeon bike between rows
of cyclists through gloomy *hutongs* in winter Beijing.

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Our classroom is so cold I drink from a hot thermos,
teach bundled in blue and feel like a Ming

emperor of poetry in icy exile, and my sorrows rope
me to my desk where I float out to the Great Wall

where the sexy moon and my shadow shout toasts and marry.
Witnesses flood in with cans of blood, trucks of tall

grief as we bike across the Great Yellow Sea of Hope.

AUGUST KLEINZAHLER

August 1995

Under the floorboards Shadow and Smoke bark
through these windy summer nights, always
at queer intervals. Something's got up their noses
or call and response with a distant yard.
All summer long awakened from dreams by barks,
remembering each of them through, shabby kinescopes.
The guys upstairs come fetch them in the morning
and disappear till night, always leaving
the light on in the storeroom,
to make it more cheerful, I suppose.
Perhaps even the radio on low, tuned
to the easy-listening channel, *KBLX, The Quiet Storm,*
102.9 FM.
I've grown used to them down there,
like the sound of the streetcar right before dawn
with its keening whine and groan.
But the renters promise to be out by fall.

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I thought of you the other night,
walking in the hills late, later than usual,
the moon only a day or two from full.
How it was full the night you arrived,
which is something you seem to plan, saying:
—*Next full moon I'll be in Torres Strait,*
P.O. Box Thursday Island.

I've been meaning to write.
The rest of the *naked ladies* finally came up,
dozens of them, waving their pink heads in the fog.
Only the one, poking through the dirt when you left,
is a stalk now with a shrivelled head.
They do look garish so late in the summer,
like Rockettes in a dusty frontier town.

But you see, none of it really fits quite right,
the pieces I find or that come round, unbidden.
I had wanted badly to get in that part,
the *wog from the western suburbs,*
your momma's fluttering hands and the trip in
with Grandma on Sunday, the two hours by train
and tram all the way to over near Bondi
for black bread and smelly salami . . .

The bits we choose to keep and what leave out—
these absences take on a life themselves.

STEPHEN SANDY

Value Added

No one knew what the stones like squatting frogs
Signified. There they were, fuming in rows, out
Of the ground; every critic had his explanation
Or hers. But—we had to remember—they

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Came to nothing, every one; those large stones
Out of the earth served the systems
Of those who considered them, as explaining
Something about the past it was important

For the explainer to explain. And yet
No one had any idea truly; there was no
Basis in fact for any view of them, and
They remained like their origins—or like

Smiling Olmec babies, sweet but ominous figures
Come from the earth to reproach us, almost
Cheerfully, for our ignorance—a mystery, just
As the probe of our feelings came up with nothing.

SUE STANDING

Solitaire

The Venerable Bede was here & here
thanks to the prick of the needle
of his temperament & faith.

Now, at Jarrow, in a vacant lot
near the ruins of his monastery
& the window made from fragments
of the oldest stained glass in England,
we see a huge hoarding
announcing "Bede's World":

What will it be?
An Anglo-Saxon Disneyland
of Viking raids & blown-up runes?
Battery-powered anchorites & cutaway

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views of an abbey like an antfarm?
Or a library of writhing scribes,
tonsured & humming in the secrecy
of their solitude tunes no one
has heard for twelve hundred years?

Drawn to the eremitical & the ruined,
I discover that loneliness is random,
solitude ritual.
And scribal error is rampant.
"God should not be subject
to the Art of Grammar,"
wrote your abbot Aelfric
in one of his prefaces.

But whose naked narrative will suffice?
"These admonitions are suitable for the teachable;
for the unteachable & hard of heart
no encouragements are sufficient."

This is your world now, not Bede's,
& I am becoming familiar
with what bones of it are left—

from the pagan thrill of Cerne Abbas,
priapic giant cheek by jowl
with the spell of Augustine's well;
to the pillow stones at Lindisfarne,
with their uneven quadrants
of crosses & names & runes;
to the uncorrupted body
of St. Cuthbert at Durham—

all embedded in the privacy
of a stopped tongue,
the solitary unravelling
of the scholar.

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SEAN LYSAGHT

Hegel's Horses

The road sloped down to meet
an old bridge spanning the Shannon
where men and horses charged.

When the Protestant bells jangled overhead
to say heaven was a smithy,
the single idea was forged,

and peace paused. Into decent quiet,
at first faintly, the galloping hooves
battered the road as if it would break.

All noise was three or four
great horses and their riders
that left us standing in their wake.

Thus Yeats, on our stabled colt,
Napoleon's cavalry at Jena,
and Tennyson's Arthur riding to his doom,

from something yoked to pride
in a Limerick field one drizzling morning,
and driven hard into the streets' narrow room.

And abandoned. With bleeding flanks,
they were left steaming
at the roadside, dragging their reins,

until a hard-pressed traveller—call him Hegel—
pulled up on a string of curses
to recover his stolen horses, yet again.

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ZBIGNIEW HERBERT

Life of a Warrior

He stood at the threshold of the room where his dead father was lying, wrapped like a silkworm in a silence of wax—and shouted. That's how it began.

He clung to the roar and climbed on it, higher and higher, for he knew silence means death. Rhythm of hobnailed boots, hoofbeats on a bridge—a hussar's sky-blue leggings. The thunder of drums as musketeers march into a cloud of smoke—silver sword of an officer. Roar from a cannon, the earth groaning like a drum—the triangular shako of a field-marshall.

And so when he died, his faithful soldiers wanted him to ascend heaven by the ladder of tumult. A hundred bell-towers rocked the town. At the moment when it swung closest to the sky, the gunners fired. But they could not split off enough of the blue glaze to slip in the field-marshall, complete with his sword and triangular shako.

Now he comes loose again, and falls on the face of the earth. His faithful soldiers pick him up, and once again fire at the sky.

Chinese Wallpaper

A deserted island with the sugary head of a volcano. In the middle of smooth water, reeds, and a fisherman with a pole. Higher, an island spread out like an apple tree with a pagoda and small bridge, where lovers meet under the blossoming moon.

If that was all, it would be a nice episode—a history of the world in a few words. But it is repeated into infinity with stubborn exactitude: volcano, lovers, the moon.

One cannot make a greater insult to the world.

Translated from the Polish by John and Bogdana Carpenter

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JANKO POLIĆ KAMOV

Sorrow

"She is dying!"

Our mother whispers too loudly. Her eyes narrow, her face becomes wider; she looks all red and round. And my sister lies on the bed with her back turned to us. Mother and I are alone. My sister seems narrow too. Her hair is thin and looks as if she has a lot of dandruff. My mother is crying. Tears stream incessantly and ever more densely from her eyes; she is biting her lips and doesn't look me in the face.

I am twelve, a sixth-grader. My sister's dying depresses me, but I cannot cry. Perhaps because it all came at a bad time, when the sun is still very high and all the rooms are full of light and the merry voices of the women going home from work.

How different it was four years ago, when I saw a dead person for the first time in my life! In the early evening, my teeth chattering, soaked from the rain—I stood with other children in front of a two-story house and watched with admiration a gentleman who pushed his way through the crowd followed by the whisper:

"He's the first-born of the deceased. . . ."

Then the women brought the children of the deceased from the house: a boy and a girl. I immediately felt envy for the skinny and ugly boy who was now the subject of conversation and interest, whom everyone was watching. I envied him terribly, and the thought that he was much uglier than I consoled me only slightly. But I pitied the girl.

They looked about in wonder and they didn't cry. The impression they left upon me was similar to the exam at school when my colleague had to recite a poem by Šenoa while I only had to answer questions about math and catechism. He declaimed from a chair next to the teacher's desk, while I answered from the next-to-last row. Hence I too started thinking about declamation: "That boy is stuttering, looking down, he looks as if he hadn't learned the lesson. . .whereas I would hold my head up high like the teacher when he reads, I would speak loudly and clearly like the principal and wave my hands just like a teacher declaiming. This boy is giving a poor performance! True, he's standing on a chair so he looks taller even than the principal, and everyone is looking at him, but still—his performance is poor. . . .Wait, it's too early. . .next year, if they let me declaim during the exam! . . .Will I live to see the day when I can show

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them all what I know, what I am capable of. . . ? This one is not worthy of declaiming. He is not worthy of the importance and respect granted him."

Now I wanted something like that. They were looking at this one too, and I envied him for it: he too was giving a poor performance: he hadn't shed a single tear. "I would act quite differently," I thought, "if my father was to die. I'd weep and pull my hair. And if they tried to carry me out, I'd hit them with my feet, bite them and yell like our neighbor Kata did when her husband died. If my father would die! Or my brother! Or even my sister! . . .It would be quite different, my lad, you who are looking at us mutely as if it was our father who had died. . .and yet you flatter yourself, you think you are important. . . .No, you did not deserve your father's death!"

And when I saw the funeral, and walking behind the coffin the same gentleman in black hiding his eyes with a handkerchief, and two others squeezing his hands to comfort him, while women were keening in the house—I perceived it all with the same awe I felt towards the priests burying Jesus Christ on Good Friday.

How different it all was four years ago!

And now I cannot even weep! And my sister dead! It is a beautiful, sunny day. I can hear the murmur of people talking, of the women giggling. Only my mother is biting her lips and the tears keep falling from her cheeks onto her breasts. There, in the corner of the big room, I can still see my poor sister's back, her wet undershirt and her left ear, white as a waxen angel's. . . .Yes, the candle is burning. But the priest still isn't here. The maid ran into town to fetch him an hour ago. Is this death? Is this how we die?

My mother is looking at me. If she could see me now! But maybe she has already noticed that I'm not weeping. . . .What will she think of me? I am ashamed, I am a cad, I am a sinner; God will punish me. . . .I am not sorry for my sister, I am not even weeping, let alone banging my head against a stone or pulling my hair.

My mother sits up. It seemed that my sister had moved. I cannot see anything. Mother is kissing her. . . .Mother is embracing her. Mother is weeping. Mother is laughing. Mother is crazy.

I don't know. I should do likewise, throw myself to the ground, embrace her, weep, carry on. . . .Do I envy my mother or my sister? Mother loved my sister more than I did; Mother loved my sister more than me.

Oh, God! Oh, God!

Mother lifts me up. Her gaze is hazy and wet. As if she is saying: you are a cad—or an idiot; either you won't weep or you can't.

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Oh, God! Oh, God!

I can't! I am a cad. I don't know how! I am an idiot. I am as confused as my colleague the reciter. I am as childish as my neighbor's little boy. I am worthless, I am unworthy, and above all I am stupid.

I cry with anger.

The maid returns and shrieks when she sees my sister. She is ugly. The priest is on his way, she says, but he still is not here. The same with my brothers. The window and the door are closed. None of the neighbors to be seen. My sister lies dead, the three of us around her. My mother is sitting and weeping. The maid sprays my sister with holy water. Then she squeezes a cross into her hands. But her hands are weak and the cross is heavy. The maid is angry, I don't know whether with the cross or with my sister. . . .I'm convinced that she is silently swearing. She has always been like that—angry and impatient. When Mother wasn't around, she would swear at us. She has been with us a long time. When I was younger, she often hit me on the forehead with her fist. Her hair is red. We call her Red Pepper. And when I cried, she would close my mouth with her hand. She is skinny. When she used to carry me, I would get tired more quickly than if I had walked on my own. She is all bones, like a man. She insults us whenever she gets angry. She has a rough voice and I have seen her drink brandy many times. She often smells of petroleum, and my elder brother Milan told me several years ago that she also drinks vinegar and that is the reason she is so skinny. No, none of us ever loved her, nor she us. We generally considered her a spy and since I started going to high school I've despised her even more because in my school we believe that spying is "absolutely the worst." I am the youngest; she doesn't even dare hit me anymore. So she tells my father lies about me smoking his cigarettes. I only picked up a butt once to see what it was like to smoke. Because of her, my father slapped me although I am now a high-school student.

So I am glad my sister will not hold the cross the way Red Pepper wants her to. I feel like laughing out loud and I am sure my dear sister would not have minded that. No, she simply will not hold the cross the way Red Pepper wants her to. How grateful I am for that! How I love my sister and hate Red Pepper!

She still won't leave her be. My sister is lying on her back. I can see her face so well. Her lips are tight. She is dead! She died without confessing. Oh, God! Oh, God!

Is she in heaven now? Is she in deadly sin? No, she is free of sin. True, she was recently rude to Father, but that was because she was ill. That is no sin. And she ate meat on Friday, because the ill are allowed to do that. And she hadn't been to church for half a year because the ill needn't go. Red

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Pepper is still near her. The cross is standing. My sister has given in. Red Pepper is now weeping, too, although I know she does not feel like weeping. She is angry because she didn't see my sister die and because she did not have the chance to close the eyes of the deceased! She too thinks she is "something"!

I go to the bed. I cannot stand Red Pepper being there. She wants everything her way. She wants to be right about everything. Now she even wants to kiss my sister. But I am already there, kissing my sister's eyes, her lips, her hair. I am kissing her although I have a bad taste in my mouth. I am weeping even though I do not feel like weeping. Red Pepper begins kissing her too, only so she can push me away. She is weeping although she would much rather curse. She pushes me away pretending to comfort me. She pinches my arm furiously. But I am holding my own. I am yelling. I am stomping my feet. I am screaming. She pinches me, I scratch her. Even now she reeks of petroleum and brandy, although she is trying to pass it off as the smell of the candle. She must be drunk. And that she would kiss my sister in that condition! I'll tell Mother. . . .

The candle turns over and burns her arm. I calm down. My mother is kissing my forehead now, caressing my hair, and I am weeping at her breast; I know Mother is pleased with me now. I am not a cad, I am not stupid. I behaved so well! I am my mother's pride and joy and she is pleased with me.

We hold our embrace. We understand each other. Mother kissed my sister as if she were kissing me; I kissed my sister as if I were kissing my mother.

Red Pepper is trying to cool her elbow. The burn must be pretty bad.

How pleasant it is at my mother's breast. I am pleased with myself, with my mother, with Red Pepper, and with my dead sister. . . .

I am so happy!

I wait for my father with great curiosity. Will he cry? Father is quite old, gray-haired and solemn. He never makes jokes. When we play, he asks: "Why aren't you studying?" He has told us so many times that we are no longer children and that we should really be more serious. "When I was your age," he said to me, "I already worked in the office, and you complain if I so much as give you a short letter to copy." Our father is generally strict and decent, he punishes with his look and his silence.

But Mother said to him several times: "You don't love them," (meaning us) "and they don't love you."

How will he act now?

He enters with the priest. He is sullen and gloomy, his eyebrows bristling, his chin trembling, his lips pursed, his mouth wide. I always

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feared him and now I fear him even more. He loved my deceased sister best, because she was the most solemn and the quietest. Now he is not looking at anybody, he only gives me a short, intense look, as if I am to blame. He is awesome. His step is firm and the rooms tremble under it. He has not taken off his hat. I am afraid of him.

If I were to weep now, would he scold me? He told me so many times that I was stubborn and spoiled, that Mother spoiled me, that I cry about trifles like a child, that I am not a man. That is why I do not love him. I fear him and respect him.

He stops by the bed. I can see his back. He is hunched forward. He has thrown his hat on the arm-chair. The priest is whispering something and making signs with his hands. Father does not move. How long will he stand like that? Who is he?

Look at him! He has turned around, red in the face, he is pulling his hair. He is suffocated with coughing. His face is wet, from perspiration I think. He has collapsed on the chair and squashed his hat. A new hat. He is moaning.

So that's who he is! So then! He too is weeping. He, who scolded me. . .he who ridiculed me. There he is, pulling his hair, hitting his head with his fists. So! So!

The priest tries to comfort him. Father is not awesome. I do not fear him. He is suffocated with coughing and tears. So! So!

Is he acting that way because he is in pain or because that's what he is supposed to do? To show off? Hasn't he always been solemn just because he is expected to be? Just for show.

They made me leave the room where my sister is lying. Now they are washing and changing her. They will lay her out downstairs. My brothers have arrived and all of us men are in this room. Father is smoking. Milan is a senior in high school and he writes poetry. Josip is nine years older than I and he works in Father's office. I did not see them arrive, so I don't know how they acted, and I wish I did. Our eldest brother is in Zagreb; we wired him to come. We are expecting his arrival with great curiosity. How will he act? Watching my brothers carefully now, I doubt that they wept. Milan has strange ideas: he says he is an atheist, he makes fun of the holy mass and of priests, even those who are not catechists! Josip already has a sweetheart and picks the most beautiful flowers from our garden. I don't mind—I respect him for it. And I wish with all my heart that he would point me out to her and say: "You see, that one there is my youngest brother. . . ."

I am impressed with Milan also, he even dares argue with Father and nevertheless Father loves him and respects him more than me. Milan is at

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the top of his class, while I got Fs in three subjects that first spring and now I have As in three subjects. Father said I would become a simple worker while Milan would be a doctor. Sure. They are grown men. Thus Milan can smoke whole new cigarettes in front of my father, while I was slapped because of a butt. That's why I would like to know whether they wept. . . .

I don't think they did. They are silent, they smoke and look at the floor. Milan is supposed to have loved our sister dearly. This is how they show their sorrow, as men and as true brothers. Father wept like a child and a true father.

This is what I don't understand. Why did Father cry? Now I respect him less and am less impressed with him. I think I love him more.

Mother comes in. I think she is displeased with my brothers. I guess they hadn't cried. Will they say to me tomorrow, the day after, in a week: "You cried like a baby"? Will I be able to cry again? To whom should I listen? Am I really just a child, spoiled by women, my mother calling me her "pet"?

I dislike both my brothers and wish they weren't here. They are so solemn, silent and simple. So is my father. And they all smoke—maybe that's why?

I get slapped for a butt. On Good Friday I had to go to church with Mother while Milan and Joso stayed home and drank on the sly. Because I am a child. And Milan is allowed to be an atheist, to smoke, he doesn't even have to weep. . . .

I understand it all now. During meals Josip drinks even more than Father, while I am allowed only a thimbleful of wine only on Sundays. Just one single time I wanted some more, without anyone noticing, and Mother beat me in front of our guests. Because I am a child. And Joso even brags about his binges! When my brothers talk about "certain things," they close the door in my face. But I know what they are talking about, I know that Joso doesn't only kiss his girlfriend on the lips but that he feels her up. . . . In short, I know more than I let on and more than they think.

When Father sends Milan to buy cigarettes, Milan sends me to do it. They can beat me and order me around, they can tell me when to cry and not to smoke. . .because I am a child.

I am left alone in the room. It is getting dark. Red Pepper brings in the lamp. My brothers and my parents are in the drawing-room because some ladies and gentlemen came to call. They left me upstairs because that's only for adults. . . .But I have decided to get back at them, to show them all that I am already a young man. . . .Namely, I have decided not to cry. . . .Red Pepper says that I am not even to go to the funeral. We'll see. I hate them all now because they despise me. Red Pepper sits down across

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the table and looks at me with sympathy—in other words, she knows how to pretend when she wants to.

"Are you afraid?"

Until now I was not afraid of anything; I never even thought of fear. She reminded me. How malicious! She says "thou" to me although Mother has warned her several times not to do it. She said that she does it because she is used to it and because she loves me! Now she is unusually gentle with me.

"Come downstairs with me, baby. . . ." She comes close and strokes my hair.

"Let go. I am not a baby and I am not afraid."

Actually, I am now afraid to be alone. My voice trembles. I'm afraid I'll begin to cry any minute now. Her tenderness has either touched me or made me angry. I don't know which. I know it irritated me.

Downstairs with her. . .what would I do there? Why is she stroking my hair now? Everyone is downstairs, they left me all alone. They are talking about all kinds of things, about my sister, about illness, about death, about love. . . .I know that my sister "had somebody" whom she called "silly," who looked at her from the road down there when she was at the window, and from the church door when she was by the main altar. . . .Even Milan's friends flirted with her, although she laughed in their faces. . . .And Professor Jarić, who has never been in our house and who doesn't talk to my family asked me a month ago: "And how is your esteemed sister?" See? I could talk about all kinds of things too. But they leave me alone, they despise and humiliate me, they think I am nothing! . . .I have no one but this ugly, skinny, angry and malicious woman, the only one who now treats me nicely, warmly and gently.

Why isn't she more beautiful?

Downstairs with her? . . .The other day a friend of Milan's was here. When Red Pepper walked by, he asked Milan: "Did you do her?" And Milan smiled but he didn't say anything. He just nodded towards me and his friend looked at me with pity and ridicule. Like, that's not for me, I don't understand. . . .But I know he didn't mean kissing, because they could talk about that in front of me. Why does she never stroke Milan's hair, for instance? Why is she not more beautiful and why am I not older? . . .I would show them all. I am so unhappy.

A lady enters; it's my godmother. The room is filled with her perfume. For some time she has been using a different perfume, stronger and more pleasant than my mother's. . . .My godmother's dress rustles when she moves. My mother's does too, when she goes calling. But this rustle is totally different now. I am blushing, I am embarrassed. Red Pepper says: "They left him all alone, poor thing." I don't hear anything else. The room

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is spinning around me, I am spinning around the furniture, the furniture is spinning around us. I feel somebody's hand on my shoulder, somebody's glove in my hair, somebody's rustle in my ear, somebody's perfume in my nose.

My eyes are burning.

My godmother is pulling me close, the black, wide, flimsy arm of her dress around my neck. She is comforting me and I am still crying. And my cheeks are burning. . . .I cannot see her, but I know very well what she is like. She has a full figure, like my mother, but her eyes are darker, her hair black. Her face is somewhat paler, her step both light and firm. She has a crooked smile. And only one of her eyes smiles. She holds her head bent to one side. She is very much like my mother and everybody says they are like sisters, but now I feel she is something completely different. I cry, but not with anger. She mentions my sister and says to me: "Poor darling!" I moan even more. And she holds me closer, comforts me more silently, strokes me more gently, kisses me more warmly. My face is red from crying, from shame and happiness. And the more I cry, the more I am ashamed. And the more I am ashamed, the happier I am. And I can only kiss her hand—white and soft and cold—with my red and warm lips.

She is leaving. Her thighs rise alternately. She has pulled up her skirts. Her black stockings and her white neck both shine under the lamp. Only her scent is left behind. . . .Why can't I sleep now? Why are they making me eat supper? How foreign and unbearable are now my brothers, my father, even my mother! . . .And how happy I'd be if my godmother were my mother. . . .

No one is crying today. My brothers did not cry at all. They say very little. Milan hasn't eaten all day. Joso—very little. I dared not eat either, even though I was terribly hungry.

My mother tried to make me eat, but I just waved her off haughtily and gloomily, like Milan did. Now Milan is my ideal because everyone agrees (Red Pepper and the milkmaid too) that he loved my sister dearly and that he is a very handsome and serious young man. Mother and Father eat a little. It's all right for them to eat (that's how I figure it) because they cried. I cried most of all, but nevertheless I dared not eat until Father became angry.

I am rather uncomfortable. I don't know what my parents, my brother and neighbors think of me now. Have I shown that I loved my sister immeasurably and that I am terribly sad because of her death? I believe I have. My godmother must have told them. But at the same time, I believe I have not shown them at all that I am no longer a child. If I could smoke silently like Milan or look down on my plate and drink like Joso. . . .They

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seem to care little about the sorrow of others and are not interested to see how their sister is mourned. . . .Maybe Milan will write a poem, like he did four years ago when our uncle died, and that poem still hangs framed in the drawing-room and all visitors read it silently and exclaim: "How beautiful!" Joso will take flowers every Saturday to our sister's grave, like he does for our brothers who died before I was born. And I? How will I show my love and my sorrow? I cry like a baby. . . .Ugh! I despise myself. . . .I too shall write a poem. I'll go to my sister's grave instead of to school. . . .

No, indeed I am not as childish and weepy as my family believes. I don't cry just out of fear, sorrow or anger. That first spring when I got my first F, I came home in tears and Father did not say one harsh word. Otherwise he might have beaten me. At school also, when I don't know my lessons, I cry and the teacher only says "Sit down" and doesn't write anything into his book. He thinks that I am crying out of fear and that I don't know the answer out of fear. I cry like that when the catechist is about to box my ears. Others laugh, so he slaps them, but he leaves me alone, he doesn't touch me. The same when a teacher wants to write a comment on me into the class-book. I laugh too, but only silently. I am smarter than all of you! So there, if you really want to know what kind of child I am! . . .Oh, God! Oh, God! So I am not sorry for my sister—I am a great sinner. . . .Oh, God! Oh, God! What am I to do?

Red Pepper says I am not to walk behind the casket. This is already the third day that I haven't been to school, and I won't have to go tomorrow either, maybe even the day after tomorrow. . . .And when I do go, I will not be examined for another week, the teachers won't do it, out of consideration. Especially Jarić. That's what it was like for Ferko, when his father died that first spring, when they were still living in town. . . .In the meantime, I don't even pretend to study, and now that cannot and must not irritate my father. I won't have to study for a few more days. My sister died, so who would think of school now?

And after all, what is one F, even ten Fs, compared to a single death?

They laid my sister out downstairs. Today after dinner I saw her. A wide white veil over her face, probably because of the flies. Neighbors—women mostly—keep coming, sprinkling holy water on her, whispering. Praying and talking. I cannot discern about what. The room smells, reeks actually, of wax. My sister's face is squeezed tight, her lips are very thin and pale, barely visible. A frown on her face. She is not smiling, and that is good, because Red Pepper says: "When the dead smile, they are inviting someone to follow them." All that leaves no impression on me. The sun is as strong as yesterday, the same murmur on the street, everything is exactly the same, only the scent is different. My stomach hurts. Mother sent us,

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forced us really, to kiss our sister. That has to be the most terrible moment of my life. To kiss that face with no blood, no flesh, no warmth in it! Who is that? . . .I am now terrifyingly cold. I barely touch her with my lips, having first touched her with my nose. And my mother, who has made us do this, now looks terrible, merciless and abhorrent, like she is not our mother at all. And our sister isn't our sister. I could look at her like this (if they made me) for all eternity without shedding a single tear. She is so cold that I too feel cold. Moreover, I sincerely doubt that that thing over there had ever been my sister, that I ever had a sister; I doubt that the thing had ever been alive. . . .Maybe I would look at "the thing there" with curiosity if it hadn't been my sister. . .that is, if I weren't afraid that the others would see it was curiosity and curiosity alone. . . .

I am sullen.

How warmly, how sensually, how brotherly I mourned for my sister yesterday, when my clean, sweet-smelling, beautiful godmother was here, and not these dirty, crooked, yellow old crones smelling like sweaty socks. They spoiled everything for me, even my crying; I don't feel like doing anything, even mourning. . . .

Mother also is ugly, skinny and wrinkled today, all blue in the face. Just like those old crones. How different that kiss yesterday had been. I can still see my godmother—like last night. . . .I love her and only her. No one else.

Because I no longer have a sister.

I sneaked into the drawing-room. Dark, humid, silent. Something moved on the couch. Joso! He quickly pushed his handkerchief into his pocket and left.

Ah!

He cried when no one could see him! Him too! So he won't be able to make fun of me; I am not a child. So Joso too loved my sister more than I did. He forced himself not to cry in front of the others, so they would not see him. And I forced myself to cry so they could see me.

Oh, God! Oh, God!

Am I really the only sinner? Not one tear was really for my sister. Everyone loved her and still loves her more than I did. Because alone like this, where no one can see me, I cannot cry. I cannot!

Oh, God! Oh, God!

I call her face to mind, but in vain! Stupid me! They were not wrong when they said that I had no memory. I push my face into my hands, into the armchair, into the couch, I close my eyes with my hands, with my elbows—to no avail. . .nothing. I have forgotten my sister's face. . . .And she used to carry me around, comb my hair, change my clothes. When I was ill, she would read to me. . . .When I was little, she preached to me. She was pretty and pink. Her eyes never smiled, she rarely smiled. When I went

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downtown with her, men turned to look at her. Everyone liked her and I was proud of her. Everyone said she was very pretty and I loved her. . . .

In vain! I cannot imagine what she was like. That thing out there on the bier, that changed everything. Those old crones, they spoiled it all. That kiss, it destroyed everything. There are photos on the wall over here. She is there too. This is the latest, but it didn't turn out well (my brother took it) and she doesn't look like herself. On this one she looks the way I had not known her, but she is so much like the one I knew; here she is in short skirts, a little girl. Here she is exactly like the one I loved and the one who loved me. That's her. Her I love even now, and I cry for her—from my heart, like a true brother—and no one can see me and no one will ever know. . . .

My little, my good, my beautiful sister. I love your hair, your large eyes, your serious face. . .and your bare little legs, your short skirts. And your small hands and tiny dimples. . .my little, my good, my beautiful sister.

Look, look! We are alone and yet I am crying as heartbrokenly as I did yesterday, when my godmother wrapped the black, wide, light arm of her dress around my neck. . .(she loved you so much). . .and no one will know about it, and no one must know. God can see and you can hear, for you are up there with our good Lord, my good little sister. . . .

Everything. Everything. Your knee, your fingers, your little shoes. . . everything. Everything. Your locket lying on your holy and warm breast. I never loved anyone as much and no one ever loved you as much!

I am crying. I will bathe you in my tears, I will drown you in them. My sorrow is great and my love even greater. . . .

God can see and you know—no one else. No one.

Our eldest brother Matija arrived tonight. We rarely see him. He is a wine wholesaler in Zagreb, he knows all the influential people, sometimes he sends us five crowns apiece, for Christmas, New Year and our birthdays. We all respect him. To tell the truth, this Matija is my ideal, because—how shall I put it—Milan is just a student like me. And Joso, even though he works for a living, does not do so far away from us, but through our father. After all, I've called both Milan and Joso "asses" and lots of other things many times. And when Joso chases me I stick my tongue out at him from the top of a tree, and when he pretends to want to climb the tree (which I know he can't do because he is fat and clumsy) I spit on his head and when I succeed, he waves his fist at me and I feel just as if he had given me a ripe fig (I am partial to figs). I am not afraid of him, and even Mother laughs with me then, even Red Pepper is on my side on such occasions. She hates Joso now that he has a girlfriend.

Thus I really respect only Matija. So his behavior is the most important to me. Here he comes. We all run out to meet him, all except Milan

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and my father. But he only shakes our hands and says nothing. Joso turns away, Mother embraces him and I take his hand. I think he is going to cry too. It is getting dark again. The sky is clear. All our neighbors are at their windows. I can see each one. What's more, my friend Ferko is pointing at something with his finger. He is still a child. His mother slaps his face. She is right: he doesn't know how to behave. It is not nice to point with your finger! His sisters, one more beautiful than the other, are at the other windows. And that's just for today. What will happen tomorrow? All houses will be filled with light. And I am not to go? We'll see. How long it is taking! It seems to me that we have been walking for a full hour, and the road is right next to our door. I know Joso can spit at the road from our windows—a few years ago we respected him for it. But not today. We are no longer children.

Matija will probably cry. Will he? The same old crones are at the door. Matija is looking down, his hand on his chin. He will surely cry.

He is inside. He is moaning. He can no longer contain himself. He is sobbing. The crones are whispering: "That's the eldest. He loved her most." He is a wonderful man. Milan steps aside. I look at him, but he dares not look at me. Joso also looks away. They are afraid to look at him, to look at Matija. And with my eyes I try to tell them: he too is crying, and he is not a child. He is a man, bigger and older than us. . . .He smokes the finest cigars. . .he drinks, good Lord, what none of us has ever seen. . . .He already had a fiancée and he broke off with her. . . .He is already capable of being a husband and a father, he is more capable than Joso and more learned than Milan. And he does not hide his tears! He acts wonderful, we can all sense that and everyone will talk about it. We cry with him. I am proud of my brother Matija, we can all be proud of him. What a man! What a brother! He knows how to behave! It is indeed wonderful "behavior."

Milan and Joso saw it all—and vanished. They left in order to avoid my eyes. For if I cry, it doesn't mean that I am a child; and if they don't cry, it doesn't mean they are something special. It is natural that I should be more impressed with Matija who, among other things, writes articles for newspapers and who is personally acquainted with many writers, than with Milan who published a single poem—titled "Brother"—three years ago.

After all, Matija lives in Zagreb, he has been to Vienna, Budapest and God knows where else, while Milan has only seen the places I too have seen. No more and no less. So Matija knows better how a grown man is to act in such moments. Provided such a man actually loved his sister, of course.

I dislike Milan now. His behavior—not wanting to cry when we all cried—offends and depresses me. He is younger than Matija, a student like me, and still—Matija is much closer to me now. His crying, I think, is the only, or at least the main reason. Milan is becoming a stranger to us, and

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thus incomprehensible: he doesn't act like we do on an occasion that should mean to him as much as it means to us. He is different, or at least wants to be, he is an atheist too, and he doesn't believe for the same reason that he won't cry. He just thinks he is something special and wants to show off.

I don't say anything to him; it seems everyone resents his behavior, but no one says anything. But if Matija hadn't come, I don't know whether I would feel that way about Milan. So I worry that maybe my brother will not want to go to the funeral or wear black. I worry because I do love him and I would be terribly sorry if others believed what can be seen of him and heard from him was really true.

I already hold God and tears within me, so how can he be ashamed of that. . .maybe the same way I am ashamed of my tears and kisses in the humid and dark drawing-room, next to my little sister, when I think of my godmother. . . .

That time I mourned my sister for her sake, other times for the sake of others. . .other times I wanted to show it, that time—to hide it. . . .

Why am I ashamed of my true sorrow? And why am I proud of my forced tears?

I don't understand anybody and it is all unclear to me and Milan spoiled it all. He made me angry and contemplative. His "something-special" behavior and "something-special" opinion unsettle me and arouse my curiosity. He has changed; his face is pale, he is standing aside as if he feels foreign and lonely among us, and I feel sorry for him. I would like to say something comforting to him. He unsettles me, makes me think and arouses my curiosity.

He really is something special!

Because of him—it is strange—I can begin to doubt my sorrow and my love. But one thing I know: I cannot cry or kiss my sister now. Everything seems tight, disgusting and unbearable. A forced kiss on the icy face of a corpse—that's what we all are and that's what she is. That is our sorrow and that is our love!

Milan does not cry and does not believe. Milan is something special.

But now I cannot cry and I cannot hold still.

Milan has really spoiled it all.

There he is in the hall. He is alone. Why did I feel the need to comfort him, to soothe him, to talk to him, to be friendly?

I ask him for a cigarette. He gives me one without hesitation. The smoke bites my eyes, I cough, cry, suffocate. . .all make-believe, to cheer him up. But he doesn't laugh and doesn't make fun of me.

He abruptly turns and leaves.

I thought it was a "big deal" to walk behind the casket, and going to the funeral—even though I had my brand-new black suit—seemed harder

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than going to school unprepared when I expect to be examined. But, oh! It was so easy, and—why hide it—no fun at all. My shoes were too small, I could only think about going back by coach and I looked forward to that.

I didn't cry until we got to the cemetery. Then I sobbed because Matija was sobbing and because my godmother came to comfort me. . . .Strange. I felt her scent before I could see her black and flimsy dress. Anyway, I think it is not usual to cry at funerals, that's why women and children don't walk behind the casket. The fact that they let me come only means that they think I am no longer what I used to be. And I do feel somehow older, stronger, more experienced. I've had an unusual experience, something I will be able to tell about.

I no longer have a sister, so—

These words sound terrible now, maybe because I am alone and everything around me is silent. The past two nights I slept in the same room with my father and mother. We were all together these past two or three days, day and night, and the house was full of guests, neighbors and relatives. . .but tomorrow! The day after tomorrow, when Matija leaves, when we are left alone, when Joso goes to his fiancée, Milan to his friends, Father to the library, Mother visiting, and I remain alone in the big and dark house, where my once healthy and solemn sister used to play the piano, she who feared no one, who could walk at midnight all alone in the garden and the woods, who made fun of Red Pepper when she started talking about ghosts. . . .How will I prove what I will tell the others—namely, that my sister with whom I talked, walked, sang, ate, read—is now dead. . . .Dead! Everyone already knows, even the papers wrote about it and they will all ask me about it. . .but what shall I say, what shall I write for myself, how do I convince myself?

It's terrible. I can easily talk about her, but it is hard to think of her. In a word, I am afraid. When I'm alone like this, all kinds of thoughts come to mind. When you dream that a dead person is laughing and beckoning you as if they were alive, that means, according to Red Pepper, that you will soon follow them. . . .Will there not be many nights when I will want to fall asleep in order to escape such thoughts and fear sleep because I might dream such dreams. Terrible. My sister is dead. I dare not think about what has been. Her dying, the death, the bier, the last kiss, the flowers; how quickly she was losing weight, how her hair fell out, how she looked at the pieces she spat out. When I am alone, I cannot think at all of the sister whom I knew, whom I saw live and die.

When I am alone, I can only think of my sister in short skirts, the one I have never seen, alive or dead, whom I kissed and mourned in the little drawing-room; it is about her that I can think now that I'm alone; yes, I could and would like to dream about her. It's just that. . .I can't talk about her.

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Everything. Everything else is terrible and although the sun is very high, I am afraid to be alone. . . .And when I'm not afraid, I am ashamed.

At dinner Mother asked several times: "How did it go? Who came to the funeral?" But Matija said: "I don't know, who would think of such things at a time like this?" I saw perfectly well who was there, but I gave her the same answer as Matija. So did Joso and Milan. Now I have doubts about my brothers. . . .Are they answering like Matija or like me?

Did they see or didn't they?

Joso didn't cry at the funeral. He only cried twice (silently, not sobbing).

That time when Matija sobbed (and he ran to the drawing-room). And the time when he was alone in the same drawing-room (and ran out). Joso is twenty-three. I am suspicious of him now; a strange thought is plaguing me. . . .Would I cry as heartbrokenly if my brother died and if I didn't have a godmother? And how would it be if my father died, and would it be the same if my mother died?

I must not think. Every thought unsettles and upsets me. I have no will.

Tomorrow I'm going to school. That is a black thought. And Matija is leaving. That too is a black thought. We will go on as before. Father will be irritated if I don't study. (We are, after all, not in mourning anymore!) My godmother won't stroke my hair (there is nothing to comfort me about!) and our neighbors will not point me out. (Now I am the same as Ferko and everybody else!)

Ugh!

And Milan won't give me cigarettes! (Now everything is the same as before, when I didn't smoke!)

Ugh! If I heard right, we won't be allowed to sing for some time (nor laugh, joke or fight, I suppose), like yesterday when a corpse was in the house—only now there is none. . .

Ugh!

After so many days I went to school today. My friends asked me several questions which confused me less than I am now confused with my answers.

One of them asked: "Did your sister have a fiancé?"

Another asked: "What did she die of?"

I talked and talked and couldn't bring myself to say: "Of consumption."

And this I don't understand. It seems to me that my friends would respect my sister less and I would have to be ashamed of her if they found out that she had had no fiancé. For a girl who doesn't have a fiancé is either ugly or stupid. . . .And consumption is a shameful disease, just like the very

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word "consumption" is an insult. That's what we call a teacher who is ugly, always angry, always giving Fs. My sister once said she would rather kiss his dog—a bulldog—than its master.

Everything confuses me really and I don't understand anything. I thought I would be very flattered when my schoolmates told me: "Oh, how you cried" (Ferko was at the funeral, as were many others) and "How you (her brothers) loved her!" But I was much more flattered when they told me that many of Milan's friends fancied her, and that Professor Jarić was absolutely crazy about her.

Yes, I am more flattered now when I am told my sister was beautiful than if I were told that she was—good.

No. I don't understand. Today I walked home with Ferko and he told me how it was when his father died. He felt important and looked at me with a kind of contempt, as if to say I was less experienced and more childish then he is.

I wanted to tell him but didn't that he who still points things out with his finger did not deserve that his father should die any more than he deserved good grades. Usually his mother goes to beg the teachers on his account and that saves him. Because his mother is very pretty. Ferko also said: "Boy, you sure did cry!"—and I am now ashamed because of that. He was making fun of me and humiliating me. He meant: "What is a sister compared to a father!"

Anyway, you can't see any sorrow in him now, and it has only been half a year. Will it still show on me? Does it still show on me?

Today the teachers did not examine me out of consideration. Nor will they tomorrow. But in a few days. . .I must make up for it now, study all the time. . . .I have three Fs to correct. The spring is almost over. . . .What if I have to go to summer school?

Why wouldn't my mother go to talk to the teachers? Or my godmother? She is prettier. My mother isn't pretty at all.

Last night I dreamt of my godmother and my sister. My godmother was the same as she is now, but my sister was the way she was a long time ago, before I knew her.

At dinner Mother said she had dreamt of our sister. Joso did too. I didn't say anything. Mother asked me and Milan: "Didn't you two dream about her at all?"

Milan shrugged. Why did that question confuse and embarrass me and why did I lie looking at my plate and saying just: "No!"

It seems that I love my mother much less than I used to, and she looks upon me the way she looked at my brothers when they couldn't or wouldn't cry. I am no longer her pet. I feel much closer to Milan now. . . .

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Today Mother asked me and Milan again: "And you really didn't dream about her at all?"

Actually, I had seen my late sister two more times in my dreams and she always looked like in those photos in the drawing-room which I kissed and over which I cried.

Why can't I talk about that?

Why don't I feel the need to at least tell my mother a lie and thus comfort her?

I cannot cry at her breast anymore.

I am sullen.

Tomorrow I am to be examined in three subjects, and I haven't been studying at all. That is, I study, but I don't understand what I read. And I can no longer ask my mother to go and beg for me.

The teachers told me I will get an F. I am sad. My mother noticed it today and said: "What's the matter? You have changed so much since your sister died. . . ." And she kissed my hair.

How does she interpret it? Will she defend me in front of Father if I fail in school?

I think she will. . . .She loved me and my sister so much.

And so did I. . . .

Translated from the Croatian by Ljiljana Šćurić

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Tribal Customs

A Tribe Apart: A Journey into the Heart of American Adolescence. By Patricia Hersch. Fawcett Columbine. $25.00

It took me longer to read Patricia Hersch's *A Tribe Apart: A Journey Into the Heart of American Adolescence* than it did to read *War and Peace*, a book which is considerably longer but hard to put down. Hersch's book is hard to pick up. I repeatedly asked myself, nagged by my obligation to review it, why it inspired in me such a peculiar combination of boredom and depression, and finally reached the conclusion that both the author's sensibility and the minds of her subjects are so empty of anything but the banal and the most received of current wisdom as to make one want to get up and leave any room in which they are holding forth. In this case the rooms are chapters, and there seem to be too many of them.

It is Patricia Hersch's contention, in this report of several years she spent entering into close communion with a group of middle-class "culturally diverse" teenagers, that they suffer from a lack of adult attention. In minutely detailed accounts of their conversations and observations of their behavior, she documents her thesis that today's adolescents, more isolated and more unsupervised than previous generations, and in a more amorphous and unpredictable society, are growing up without the interaction with adult role models that should prepare them for taking on the responsibilities of adult life. Fair enough. But, one cannot help asking, as one makes one's way through this book, what do the adults in these young people's lives have to offer them in the way of "role modeling"?

Parents? Well, the worst of them in the cases of the eight teenagers whose lives Hersch follows in detail are abusive or emotionally or physically absent (mothers who work full time, parents who are divorced). The best of them are encouraging and supportive. Hersch set out to "immerse [herself] in the adolescent way of seeing" and has done such a good job that she becomes indistinguishable from her subjects. She refers not to mothers and fathers but to "moms" and "dads," is given to the usage of the ubiquitous "like" in place of "as," and remains scrupulously nonjudgmental, reveling in the young people's appreciation of her unfailing willingness to listen to them for hours on end. She has bought into the value placed by our therapeutic culture on "understanding." She offers no judgment when she hears about teenage abortions, drug dealing, or defacement of public property by graffiti "artists." She wants us to join her inside the minds of her subjects, but to what end? In real therapy, the goal is change. It does not stop with the act of listening. The adult privy to these often

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pathetic confidences might well feel some responsibility to offer judgments from a mature perspective where there is no one else to do so. But then there would be no book, or perhaps one of a different kind.

The best of the "moms" are there after school to provide a sense of security. The "dads" coach their sons' sports teams. Such parents are certainly at least what Winnicott calls "good enough" parents. No parents can be called upon to provide more than stability, affection, a sense of direction. But something is still missing. Hersch, like so many others, thinks "society" isn't doing its job with respect to the needs of adolescents. Now what can this mean? Just how can "society" serve "the needs of developing adolescents"? I can think of only one way: through schooling. Hersch thinks so too. She wants schools to pay more attention to the emotional needs of teenagers, to provide more extracurricular activities, more of a social life, that will keep them off the streets and presumably out of each others' beds.

Nowhere, for all the talk about school, is there the faintest echo of an interest in the life of the mind. School for the good students among them is about getting good grades so you can get into a "good" college, preferably on an athletic scholarship, but nowhere in the course of 375 pages is there a word about history, poetry, myth, about anything learned for its own sake, about a window opened on the world of civilization, the origins of the universe, the wonders that have been wrought with the English language so pathetically impoverished in the discourse of these young people. They hope to major in subjects like "communication" and "business administration." When a line of poetry is quoted it's from a pop or folk song. They haven't fallen in love with any books, don't talk about favorite authors, never seem to suspect there are experiences beyond the familiar and mundane. (The exception is a young man who is reluctant to fit in to his suburban world of home and school, preferring to spend time alone in the wilderness. At first one thinks he may be right to disdain the lackluster existence offered him; later one finds he is a schizophrenic who eventually commits suicide.)

These young people are as ignorant of the culture, traditions, and institutions of which they are the inheritors as the barbarians were of the world of the Greeks. Either that, or Hersch is not telling us something about their lives; but one doubts it. There is nothing at all in this book to suggest there is an intellectual purpose to their schooling or that the author even notices it is missing. In this regard she is a perfect voice for the point of view that characterizes the present system for educating America's young. They should be given encouragement to think well of themselves and should be helped to keep out of trouble. They should learn to get along with all kinds of people. And they should all come out fairly equal in the end.

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Which they do. What is missing in this outcome is the eccentric teacher who inspires and thrills, the student who stumbles on the mysteries of chamber music, of the moral universe of the nineteenth-century novel, the workings of the human body, or the intricacies of mathematics. There are no Miss Jean Brodies here. The good-natured teachers and good-hearted administrators at the suburban middle and high schools of the world Hersch depicts could never seduce with learning. No subtleties, no suspicion that there is more to life than polite church-going, senior proms, and varsity games, none of the burning ambition once to be found in immigrant families. There is nothing out there to compete with the images and values of the media culture, no effort to see the world on a wider screen than that framed by the television set.

Is this a necessary condition of democracy? Only when equality has been defined in terms of outcome rather than of opportunity. Today's schools interpret their mission as one of social engineering. Transmission of the culture, an understanding of the development of our democratic institutions and the traditions that have grown up around them over time, has lost out to the immediate politics of race, gender, and ethnicity.

Egalitarianism trumps excellence, which will always be a condition that pertains to only a few among the many who need to be educated. The government bureaucrats, teachers' unions, and education school faculties that rule the world of schooling have all but outlawed ability grouping (they call it "tracking") as undemocratic. For reasons that serve their own ends better than they do those of the children in the classroom, they have put in place policies that militate against the encouragement of high academic achievement. The ed schools promote theories and techniques of teaching reading and math that bypass the drill-and-practice methods needed to master them; they encourage group learning in which the teacher is demoted to a "facilitator"; and they disdain the stories of those whose achievements are the stuff of our history. They make pious statements about replacing the traditional curriculum with "critical thinking skills," but what facts, what knowledge do the youngsters in communities like the one Hersch writes about have to practice their thinking skills on?

As long as one asks of schools only that they provide the "comfortable" and "caring" environment Hersch wants to make up for the deficiencies of parents who are themselves adrift in a society that offers little in the way of moral or intellectual anchor, there will be a growing void at the center of American society. For a sobering view of what kinds of things may come to fill that void one need only read her account of the seduction of suburban teenagers by the culture of rap, their infatuation with the clothing and the vocabulary of the "gangsta-rappin' boyz-from-the-hood," of the inner-city "hip-hop" street culture with its glorification of violence.

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"Black rage," Hersch tells us, "is in as a cultural style for white middle-class kids."

There must be some young people in the Reston, Virginia community Hersch writes about who see beyond the circumscribed world of their friends and their school, who read, explore the past, and dream of a larger future, who will invent, extend, and preserve something worth preserving. One hopes so, but they are nowhere to be found between the covers of this book and nothing it tells us about the schools where they spend most of their adolescence suggests their presence. And as long as American public education fails to provide at least the opportunity for some light to shine through the thickets of mediocrity that surround the schools, some inducement for those who can to rise above the ordinary, it will fail those of the young who might profit from what used to be meant by a liberal education.

It's this paucity of intellectual experience that most strikingly characterizes the young lives that are described in this book. Like the unreliable narrator of fiction (think of Ring Lardner's "Haircut" or Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*), Patricia Hersch has told us something beyond what she intended.

RITA KRAMER

Going Over the Ground

THE IRON TRACKS. By Aharon Appelfeld. Schocken Books. $21.00

The ten translated novels of Aharon Appelfeld have explored extraordinary corners of Holocaust darkness. Jews trapped in denial of their pariah status deceive themselves in *Badenheim 1939*, Jews obsessively concerned with returning to their "homes" where they will be caught in the killing machines stumble to destruction in *To the Land of the Cattails,* and Jews whose post-Holocaust lives are hardened and cruel live blindly like the protagonist of *The Immortal Bartfuss*. In his latest novel, *The Iron Tracks*, Appelfeld explores the necessity and the inadequacy of revenge.

A man at first as featureless as Kafka's K. rides trains through the Austrian countryside, descending at certain out-of-the-way stops on his itinerary. He is grateful for pitifully small comforts in one village or another—a good buffet served in the local inn, a welcome cup of coffee at a station, here or there a familiar face. He keeps a strict schedule, savoring sameness, though sometimes he breaks down, gives way to melancholy,

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spends days sleeping it off in an inn, and then has to miss some of his station-stops. For the most part, his discipline is as iron as the tracks.

"Thus it is every year," he muses about his bleak life. "And in this repetition lies a strange hopefulness. As if our end were not extinction but a sort of constant renewal."

Not at once, but slowly, a plan for revenge, a murder, is revealed. Nachtigel is the name of the man who must be killed, ironically calling to mind the sweet-voiced bird that sings its way through fairy tales, but that is also a night-singer, a disturber of rest. He must be killed to avenge the killing of the narrator's parents.

Train travel with its scheduled starts and stops, itself an anodyne, takes on a double purpose: to bring the narrator closer to his goal of killing Nachtigel and to buy up plundered Jewish holy objects for sale in various towns along the traveler's route. Tracking another man, yet bound to these tracks himself, the narrator follows his course year after year, notes the aging of familiar faces, the obliteration of landmarks. Cronies, competitors, inn-keepers, women taken for a single night, former comrades—these appear at the various train stops and then recede as the train moves on. Even the narrator's name, Erwin Siegelbaum, belatedly revealed and barely invoked, fades from mind.

From a childhood friend of his father's, encountered at a station-stop, the narrator learns a piece of information that sounds one of Appelfeld's ironic notes about Jewish assimilation:

> Jacob Kron. . .told me that Father was once unanimously chosen by the Ruthenians to be their secretary and to lead their strikes. But at the last minute someone remembered that Father was a Jew, and pointed out that it wasn't right for a Jew to lead Ruthenians. Father didn't lose faith. He never returned to his origins, the Jewish quarter. Instead he remained loyal to the Ruthenians, speaking in their behalf and organizing mass meetings. He outwitted the police and performed his service in poverty and devotion.

Though Nachtigel was the actual murderer, the whole country through which the narrator travels is revealed to have collaborated in his parents' death—from the vicious Jew-hating inhabitants now gloating over their roles in the killing of Jews to the Ruthenian neighbors who turned against his father despite his selfless devotion to their welfare, hounding him into the forest where, defenseless, he was captured, sent to the camps and then to his death at Nachtigel's hands.

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In further bitterness, the narrator hears again his father's voice: "In a few generations people will remember us and say, Jewish Communism was the true Communism. Everyone was devoted, heart and soul, to the end." As for his other parent: "My mother didn't speak much. But her mute face said, Nothing will force us to abandon our commitment to reforming the world."

In *Beyond Despair*, a collection of essays published a few years ago, Appelfeld writes:

> Who can redeem the fears, the pains, the tortures, and the hidden beliefs from the darkness? Who will take that great mass which everyone simply calls the 'dreadful horror' and break it up into those tiny precious particles? . . .In their explicit wickedness, the murderers reduced the Jew to anonymity, a number, a creature with no face. . . .Art constantly challenges the process by which the individual person is reduced to anonymity. . . .

Appelfeld has brilliantly set himself the novelistic task of stripping his prose down to a bareness that adumbrates his protagonists' lives, while at the same time meticulously amassing details that will restore erased human particularity. As a result, an uncanny aliveness grips the reader, Appelfeld's high-tension trademark.

The isolated man on the train, the narrator of *The Iron Tracks,* meets other isolated men and women in the towns—Mina, singer of songs; Stark, whose cabin once served as their meeting place; Jacob Kron, who is writing a book on melancholy. From the litany of names of those the narrator meets on his rounds (we learn who is a Jew, who a half-Jew, who hates Jews, who reveres Jews) there rises up the smell and feel of what it means to be obsessed with Jews and with their fate.

Here is a conversation between the narrator and a man who gives him a kiddush cup, used to hold sacramental wine:

> "We aren't going to live forever. So I want to give you something of my own, even now. This vessel, or whatever you want to call it, belonged to my Jewish ancestors. My mother gave it to me, and I have kept it all these years. The truth is it has become a burden."
>
> "Why to me?" I tremble.
>
> "Because you're a Jew, aren't you?"

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Appelfeld makes this obsessive, grayed-out pursuit end in a stalking and shooting that feels as flat and affectless as the unending round of train travel that precedes it. Such revenges are doomed to be emptied out by the horror of events that created the need for revenge in the first place. The reader is made to feel the heartbreaking inadequacy of the act after so many years of bitter loss, devoid of mother, father, home, and every joy. How can such loss be avenged by seeing a man, crippled and bent with age, fall face down in the snow?

In Appelfeld's novels, there is no ray of hope or light of the self-transcendent sort offered by ordinary novels. All is as dark as an eyewitness Holocaust report. Why, then, do we read these novels? We read Appelfeld for the mastery that alone can illuminate the misery of history. Like the perennial rider of the train, he goes over and over the ground, emerging at certain stations to deal with what lurks there. Linguistic and structural mastery is one form of transcendence. Great imagining, without the lies of forced emotion, is another. Of such paradoxes Appelfeld creates his art, the novelist's austere balm for civilization's mortal wound.

NORMA ROSEN

Life after Death

AFTER THE HOLOCAUST: REBUILDING JEWISH LIVES IN POSTWAR GERMANY. By Michael Brenner, translated by Barbara Harshav. Princeton University Press. $24.95

When Nazi concentration camps were liberated in the winter and spring of 1945, Jewish survivors from across Europe were still not quite free. Instead, they, along with many non-Jews, became Displaced Persons, and were transferred to a series of DP-*Lager* within occupied Germany, the majority in the American Zone. In 1946, the number of Jewish DPs increased from 40,000 to 145,000, and by the summer of 1947, approximately 182,000 Jewish DPs were living throughout Germany. As Michael Brenner has noted in his compelling account, *After the Holocaust: Rebuilding Jewish Lives in Postwar Germany*, "It is surely one of the ironies of history that it was Germany, of all places, that became a haven for Jewish refugees in the first years after the war."

Although for many Jewish DPs—indeed, for a clear majority—Germany served merely as a way station *en route* to Palestine or the United

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States, signs of Jewish life began to emerge in the immediate postwar period. Out of the "remnants" of Jewish culture there appeared Yiddish newspapers, schools, theater groups, *yeshivas,* and religious congregations (even a makeshift university offering courses in history, literature, geography, English, and Hebrew was founded in the Landsberg DP camp), and free Jewish elections took place as early as October 1945. Many of these developments came about through foreign Jewish aid.

While there was a brief period of steady Jewish revitalization during the DP phase, what Brenner ventures to call the "epilogue of prewar East European Yiddish culture in miniature," most Jews were not interested in making Germany their permanent home. A poll taken in April 1946 reveals that of the approximately 140,000 Jewish DPs in Germany, some eighty-six percent had hopes of immigrating to Palestine. And even if Palestine was unwilling to raise its British-imposed ban on prospective Jewish immigrants, as the Exodus affair of 1947 dramatically illustrated (five thousand Jewish DPs were turned back, resulting in mass demonstrations and a hunger strike), Jewish DPs found alternative places to which they could emigrate: Australia, South America, Canada, and the United States (where, by 1952, approximately eighty thousand Jewish DPs had arrived). By the late 1940s, after the establishment of the state of Israel and several phases of Jewish emigration, the end of Jewish DP camps in Germany was in sight. Yiddish papers began to cease publication and various Jewish institutions were abandoned. As for the people who chose to remain, a 1950 editorial in *Undzer Veg* (which folded that same year) summed things up quite forcefully: "To remain in Germany when everything is dissolved and everyone has departed means in fact to be lost to the Jewish people."

The remaining twelve thousand to fifteen thousand East European Jews were faced with the daunting task of integrating into reemerging Jewish communities in the cities and towns of Germany. Various conflicts arose when these Jews, the so-called *Ostjuden,* had to work together with the almost equal-sized population of *Yekkes,* or German Jews, who had survived the war (either in hiding or in the camps, notably in Theresienstadt). Tensions that had existed in Weimar Germany—when, in the wake of World War I, large numbers of Ostjuden had migrated West—came back to the surface. Generally, the German Jews were less observant than their East European counterparts. Many were either children of mixed marriages or married to Gentile spouses themselves, and most had not been active in the Jewish community prior to the war. German Jews were far more likely to feel an emotional attachment, and even a sense of moral obligation, in their decision to remain in Germany. As one German-Jewish survivor proclaimed:

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> We believe we are good and true Germans, Germans who received their cultural training in German schools, heard the word of God in German from the Jewish mouth of the rabbis, and hear it still and are not ashamed to announce that Germany is our fatherland and German is our mother tongue. I and people like me are staying in Germany because we do not want to leave, because no lunatic fool, no tempter should or could rob us of our German homeland, our Germany. . . .

Although this may be dismissed by some as a form of Yekke pathology, it was certainly true that among surviving German Jews there was the sense that they had to refute Hitler, to refute the very idea of creating a Germany that was "*judenrein*."

But they also largely felt that German Jews, not the culturally less-advanced Ostjuden, should be the ones to reestablish Jewish life in the communities across Germany. The fact that in certain areas of Germany, Bavaria in particular, East European Jews made up as much as ninety percent of the Jewish population did not help the effort to return community leadership to German Jews. In Munich, the Jewish community went so far as to deny "non-German citizens" (i.e., Ostjuden) the right to vote in the community elections of 1946. Discrimination against the East European Jews by German Jews, which persisted at least until the late 1950s, stemmed mainly from their differences of religious practice, but also came from older prejudices against the Yiddish language and the fear of being associated with such visibly "Jewish Jews."

By the time that the Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland (Central Council of the Jews in Germany) was founded in Frankfurt in July 1950, and more than one hundred Jewish communities had emerged from the ruins of post-Shoah Germany, most communities were dominated by East European Jewish tradition and ritual. Even if the heads of the communities were German Jews, as was the case in Munich and Nuremberg, the orthodox practices of Eastern Jewry prevailed. As a means of consolidating the objectives of the different regional and state Jewish associations in Germany, and thereby overcoming the tensions between the German-Jewish and DP communities, the Zentralrat was to serve as an umbrella organization for all Jewish communities in Germany. It was a break from prewar Germany, where no such centralization existed, but a necessary one. "With the establishment of the council," asserts Brenner, "the Jews remaining in Germany sent an unequivocal signal: against all internal and external opposition, they were laying the cornerstone for a long-lasting infrastructure in Germany."

Jews in Germany were no longer sitting on those proverbial "packed bags," waiting for exit visas and the ticket to emigration. They had, in

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short, made Germany their dwelling place, and they needed to confront the consequences of their decision. Between 1950 and 1967 forty synagogues and temples were either built or reconstructed in West Germany. Heavy migration from Poland, the Soviet Union, Iran and Israel brought the number of Jews living in Germany to over thirty thousand by the 1980s. But the tainted legacy that permeated the air of postwar Germany made Jewish life a psychologically taxing process: "The bad conscience of living in the country of the murderers and not immigrating to the real homeland of the Jewish people determined the identity of Jews in postwar Germany for decades." Identification with Israel, which served as the basis of Jewish affirmation well beyond the Six Day War, often made for a "split personality" among Jews in Germany. (For most Jews, the preferred designation was "Jews in Germany," not "German Jews.") The alleged German-Jewish symbiosis, which was said to have flourished in prewar Germany—and whose very existence has been strongly refuted by Gershom Scholem and other postwar critics—fed into what the secretary general of the Zentralrat, Henrik van Dam, once called the "German-Jewish psychosis." Indeed, since the other major point of orientation, in addition to Israel, was the Shoah, the only symbiosis of which one could possibly speak was a "negative symbiosis."

Yet, when the Berlin Wall fell in November 1989, not only was the Jewish population growing in size, and the presence of Jews in German culture becoming more visible, but the overall process of "normalization"—indeed, a much-contested process still fraught with enormous tension—revealed itself on a variety of levels. On a personal level, a change in self-definition among Jews became apparent. In a 1990 opinion poll of Jews in West Germany, fifty-six percent rejected the statement that Israel was their "real homeland," and sixty-four percent considered themselves "above all as Germans." As second- and third-generation Jews born in Germany came of age, a sense of German identification beyond the negative seemed to be more feasible. In addition, public Jewish figures, such as the historians Julius H. Schoeps and Michael Wolffsohn as well as the writer Rafael Seligmann, began to advocate "stronger identification as German Jews," and to demand that the Central Council of Jews in Germany be renamed "Central Council of German Jews"(current president Ignatz Bubis's own 1993 memoir was fittingly titled *Ich bin deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* [I Am a German Citizen of the Jewish Faith]). For an increasing number of Jews, as an article from 1992 proclaimed, the time had now come, "to get away from the Holocaust fixation, [and to] put an end to the unconditional Israel orientation." This sentiment is of course not shared by all Jews in Germany of the 1990s, but it stands as a trend that prior to the late 1980s and early 1990s, prior to

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what some have called a move toward "normalization," would have been unthinkable.

To proclaim the beginning of a Jewish renaissance in Germany, as a special issue of *Der Spiegel* did in 1992, is perhaps a bit overly optimistic. The size of the Jewish population doubled between 1990 and 1996 (from thirty thousand to approximately sixty thousand), and there are some estimates that it will top one hundred thousand by the turn of the century. According to Brenner, Germany is currently "the only European country showing a steady increase in its Jewish population." The question of a true "renaissance," however, is rather premature. It still remains unclear if and when the Jewish community in today's Germany will be able to recognize itself among the other "normal" communities of world Jewry. And yet, what Brenner's meticulously researched and forcefully argued book makes abundantly clear is that the future of Jewish life in Germany will not be a "Germany without Jews."

NOAH ISENBERG

Fitting Vision to the Dark

FLIGHT AMONG THE TOMBS. By Anthony Hecht. Alfred Knopf. $23.00
DESERT FATHERS, URANIUM DAUGHTERS. By Debora Greger. Penguin. $14.95
DESIRE. By Frank Bidart. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. $20.00

Each of these poets fashions forms of extremity and forms of candor. The forms are often hard-won; poets have to steal back for themselves even what's given them by the world. Yet the work keeps the power of surprise. One senses in these poems, so filled with the dead, "the quickened surface of the page."

The title of Anthony Hecht's *Flight Among the Tombs* might herald a book of elegies. Its second half does offer spare, eloquent poems of mourning for James Merrill and Joseph Brodsky. But the breathtaking sequence that dominates the book, "The Presumptions of Death," has little typically elegiac about it. It is ferociously about life rather than death. It is about the postures of death *in* life, voices of death that cannot be killed. The scrupulous rage and inventiveness of Hecht's making display themselves in all of their force here.

Death speaks in each poem from behind a mask. In the early poems of the sequence, it assumes a style suited to a sly satirist of human vanity—

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"Death the Hypocrite," "Death Demure," or "Death Sauntering About," watching the living while we discuss "questions of form, the inscrutable ways of chance, / As edges of shadow harden." But the idea of death as a mute, mocking limit to human life gives way to something much more unsettling. The disguises of death compose a *Grand Guignol* on the shapes of human will; they speak to the deathly life of our living appetites and desires. Death shows itself as a spirit wound up within our postures of knowledge, our forms of inquiry, making, and mocking. It inhabits our sympathy as much as our hatred; it creeps into our irony, our self-doubt, and our wonder. Hecht's dense, eerie shifts of tone are intended to train our ears: in the elisions and oversights of these speakers—Death the Judge, Death the Archbishop, Death the Knight, Death the Oxford Don, Death the Mexican Revolutionary—one feels not merely the vanity but the bitter intelligence, the self-wounding rage, and the cruelty that can haunt our work, our shifting masks of mastery. Death abides in all our human occupations, and preoccupations. The impersonations are complex in their rhythmic variation, their allusive density, in the knife-edge balance between dark satire and sympathetic comedy. "Death the Inquisitor," for example, is at once a patient schoolmaster, a natural scientist, a speculative theologian, a torturer, and a conspirator in creating nature itself—his arch questions echoing God's grand speech at the end of the Book of Job, where the deity displays his power through the mirror of monsters like the Leviathan.

The sequence is also an emblem book, each poem faced by a suitably stark, often grotesquely comic wood engraving of Death by Leonard Baskin, the poet's co-conspirator. Unlike their models in Hans Holbein's *Dance of Death*, however, Baskin's Deaths are not mocking skeletons that taunt and ape a series of ordinary human victims—housewife, farmer, miser, priest, or apprentice. Each of Baskin's skeletons or skulls stands alone, as if it represents both tormentor and victim at once. (They often look back at *us*.) If death is the face of our activity in the world, it is no accident that so many of these poems interrogate the violence and play of the artist's work; Death the poet joins Death the painter, cabinet-maker, film director, and clown. So, for example, "Death the Copperplate Printer," who turns "Christ's cross till it turns Catherine's wheel, / Ixion's wheel becoming Andrew's cross":

> The bitten plate, removed from its Dutch Bath
> Of mordants, has been set below a screw
> That will enforce my will
> Like the press that crushed Isaiah's grapes of wrath.
> My lightest touch can kill,
> My costly first impressions can subdue.

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If there is something like a limit to this ironic, self-flattering violence, it emerges in the eerie voice of "Death the Whore," who hints through Jamesian circlings at the story of an old love abandoned, betrayed to shame. This Death taunts the nameless addressee with the memory of his own buried desire, a thing at once dead and alive. Her story exists as the merest fragment; it is present in a nameless voice, or a dim, half-visionary memory of a natural scene. But it survives to shape and harass the private self:

> And now when I occur to you, the voice
> You hear is not the voice of what I was
> When young and sexy and perhaps in love,
> But the weary voice shaped in your later mind
> By a small sediment of fact and rumor,
> A faceless voice, a voice without a body.
>
> As for the wintry scene of which I spoke—
> The smoke, my dear, the smoke. I am the smoke.

Baudelaire's dense, bitterly seductive irony haunts many of these poems. Auden is a crucial model as well, in his capacious explorations of form and tone, and in his commitment to a poetry of wisdom. Yet Hecht's vision shows at least one crucial difference from Auden's. At the end of his recent critical book on Auden, Hecht argues that the poetry offers hints of a "hidden law," an occult, even superhuman order that shapes all forms of fate, all returns and revenges, in the human world. Hecht's poems, however, see no escapes from the dangerous orders and contingent laws that humans themselves, half-consciously, often desperately, impose on the world. These orders—including those orders we call "Death"—are the objects of study in this sometimes frightening collection.

The strength of Debora Greger's *Desert Fathers, Uranium Daughters*—her best work to date—inheres not (as in Hecht) in the dramatic shaping of voices. It lies rather in certain flickering, eerie landscapes, often collages of past and present, the fancied and the familiar. Greger aims through these at a delicately ironic candor. At the center of this book is not death but a desert: spare, washed clean, wild, at once open and secret. It is a bare place full of wind, full of a scattered and glowing dust that mirrors the poet's words. This desert is no abstract, Stevensian fiction, however. It is the Nevada desert where the poet grew up, a place made twice desert by the nuclear laboratory hidden at its heart. The faintly Shelleyan wind and the dust, tasting so strangely sweet, are full of radioactivity.

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Any retrospective accusation goes underground here. The remarkable ambition of the book's opening sequence is to make this landscape—half edenic, half purgatorial—the source of the poet's own promise. Its wind and dust offer the model of her own "radioactive" words. The "landscape by which all others are found wanting" animates her desire to measure unstable levels of danger and need, to trace buried infections, to count the decays and half-lives of desires. The poetic *ephebe* finds herself, in a fashion more literal than Stevens meant it, the "foundling of an infected past." She recalls a father who monitors the radiation at the hidden laboratory, bussed back and forth daily, returning at dinner with stories about coyotes and wild rabbits, since he can say nothing about the "classified secrets" he bears with him. Memories of a Catholic upbringing weave themselves in as well—her first Communion, the instruction of kindly nuns, legends of martyred saints and anchorites. Wordsworthian that she is, Greger offers her desert as the model of all of our childhood landscapes, with their memories of daily tasks, their diffuse and vulnerable secrecy, their plainness and poison. Here the landscape of memory is animated, even made sacred, by what infects it. Hence no sympathy passes without subtle interrogation:

> Did my father dread the Saturdays it snowed?
> Where was the hush of a world brought to a halt
> at the reactor's gate, the badge you showed?
> He made the sidewalk safe for us with salt.
>
> My mother forced a paperwhite to bloom,
> pure as the snow's irradiated room.

Later poems in the volume put this mythmaking to the test. Troubled residues of this desert thus surface in lyrics about Venice and Rome, or in elegantly ventriloquized monologues by Psyche, Ovid, and Marco Polo (all of whom appear in half-contemporary disguise—the exiled Ovid, for instance, discovered making himself up for a transvestite's convention at a provincial motel). Not all of the notes ring flawlessly. Greger's interweavings of lyrical order and diurnal accident can feel strained; irony doesn't always keep sentimentality at bay. The shock of finding thus gets compromised. But her labors in the adjustments of elegy, and in the disguises of mourning, do bear fruit, as in a moving poem in memory of James Merrill, with its strange echo of Lowell's "Skunk Hour":

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Call us. Call us out of the animal.
The dead are good tonight but I,
just the raccoon rustling the trash out back,
will lift my quivering snout

from the delicate ribs of a chicken.
Crouch down. Tomorrow I'll remember nothing
though a rank scent persists on my paws.
Put on your mask, your domino. I lift my voice

like a scrap of meat, into a monody.

Few things in contemporary poetry are more astonishing than to watch the words which Frank Bidart lays on a page. Even when, as so often, he ruthlessly steals and re-arranges pieces of other texts—literary or historical—the words feel like something newly invented, both made and discovered. Bidart places words in a field of attention that makes them witnesses, traces of need and dread, marks of trauma, at once contingent and indelible. There is nothing secret, or at least hermetic, about these poems. Though the sources of their weight are often invisible, they remain open to the guilt, and immense ambition, of their own making. They tear us because they demand an answer from us. In his new collection, *Desire,* Bidart gives us pieces of an *ars poetica*: "We fill pre-existing forms and when we fill them we change them and are changed." "Art is a mirror held up by an artist who himself needs to see something, held up before a nature that recoils before it."

"The Return," one central poem of this volume, bases itself on a passage in Tacitus's *Annals of Imperial Rome.* This tells of how Tiberius's adopted son, Germanicus, finds and gathers the bones of three Roman legions horribly slaughtered by German tribes, making sacrifices to the dead, seeking revenge upon the murderers. Save for three epigrammatic couplets in the middle (e.g., "Epicureans saw in the ghostly mire / an emblem of the nature of Desire"), Bidart adds little to Tacitus's own words. But Germanicus's return is also the poet's. Teased apart and recomposed, Tacitus's history resonates with, becomes a mirror of, Bidart's own work of reporting, witnessing, doing honor to the dead. The poem *is* the bones, the ground, the weapons, the accidental gathering, the dangerous gesture of obsequy, the slaughter itself, the flight of enemies:

on the open ground

whitening bones scattered where men had been struck down
fleeing

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heaped up

where they stood their ground

Varus' first camp with its
wide sweep

across the open ground

the ruined
half-wall and shallow ditch

on the open ground between them.

For Bidart, the incommensurate, closed world of the dead has emissaries; ancient coins, like words, are a "bright circle / of appetite, risen to feed and famish us. . . ." Such a possibility comes into existence on the page with the risk of a fresh finding, with the candor of "unhuman eyes // when they gaze upon what they desire / unstained by disgust or dread or terror."

The astonishing thirty-page poem that closes the volume, "The Second Hour of the Night," draws on two sources. The first is a passage from Berlioz's *Memoirs,* describing the composer's revery as he watches over the deathbed of his wife, the Irish actress Harriet Smithson. It describes her human and artistic struggles, and Berlioz's guilty recollection of what he made of a woman he first glimpsed playing Ophelia; the composer speaks of how his work and love became her fate. The second, and more extensive, adaptation is from Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* the story of Myrrha's tortured love for her father Cinyras. It follows her struggle with her desire, its secret fulfillment, Myrrha's discovery and flight, her metamorphosis into a myrrh tree, the birth of the child Adonis. Myrrha, in one way, is Smithson herself, a voice that answers Berlioz's bafflement and pity, tracking her own wish and fantasy. But it is hard to fix persons here, so many versions of the story does Myrrha herself suggest. Bidart's steady, broken staging of the myth keeps strange our pictures of what it is possible to desire, how desire cares for or conceals itself. The story asks, from whence do we inherit desire, what does our desiring for us? Myrrha, he writes, "would anatomize the world / according to how the world / anatomizes DESIRE." In this poem, desire quickens along impossible surfaces of fancy and recollection, even as it quickens across and through skin. It moves toward what is unreal, and yet embodied, what has the power to change us.

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. . .but you have lied about your
solace, for hidden, threaded

within repetition is the moment when each step
backward is a step
downward, when what you move toward moves toward

you lifting painfully his cloak to reveal his
wound, saying, "*love answers need*". . .

Approaching death, for days Myrrha more and more
talked to the air:—

My element is the sea. I have seen

the underside of the surface of the sea, the glittering
inner surface more beautiful than the darkness below it,

seen it crossed

and re-crossed by a glittering ship from which dark eyes
peering downward must search the darkness.

Though they search, the eyes,
fix upon nothing.

Myrrha tells her unborn child, "listening / within her, the story of Myrrha and Cinyras." This is Myrrha's final prayer to the gods as she is pursued:

Make me nothing
human: not alive, not dead.

Bidart makes that wish, if not more intelligible, yet possessed of a fresh power to test our pictures of human wish.

In "Proust on Skates" (included in *Flight Among the Tombs*), we see the bedridden author, scandalously re-entering the public world, tracing grand and fragile figures on the ice. "As usual, all alone," he

issues forth
Into the midst of strangers and his own
Interior debates.

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Books of poetry issue forth in the same way. Their happiness, like that of Hecht's Proust, may be "glancing," but amazing when we come to it.

KENNETH GROSS

"Perilous Interface": Recent Poetry

THE WOMAN WHO DIED IN HER SLEEP. By Linda Gregerson. Houghton Mifflin Co. $19.95
BLACK ZODIAC. By Charles Wright. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. $22.00
SIGNS OF ARRIVAL. By Jeffrey Harrison. Copper Beech Press. $10.00
SHADOWS BURNING. By W. S. Di Piero. Northwestern University Press. $29.95

At a moment when most innovations in the period style seem exercises in sampling, appropriation, and collage, when fragments, interruption, lacunae, and the indeterminate appear to be the prized traits of verse, it is a delight to read four books that value something quite different: exactness of vision, precision of representation, and the journey of meditative discovery.

Linda Gregerson's second collection of poems, *The Woman Who Died in Her Sleep*, confronts the fundamental questions of existence—mortality, sexuality, and spirituality—with a wind-swept clarity and parabolic stoicism. At once, the modernist doctrine of impersonality and the mythic expanse of the confessional *self* are forged into an alloy of strength. What Gregerson produces are poems unlike any I have ever read, and in trying to parse out lines of influence or a connection to the period style, I find myself in wonder at the poems' originality, intelligence, and insight.

The book is prefaced by the following: "The source tale is slightly different: when the third daughter is asked to win her share of the kingdom by declaring her love for her father the king, she says, 'I love you more than salt.'" The tragic misjudgment of Lear is the lodestone at the heart of this collection. In "Salt," Gregerson writes: "The banished one in the story / measures / all that might heal him by all / that's been lost." These poems radiate out from the inevitable pain of being a parent to a child and of being a child to a parent. Each cannot love enough, in the end, to save the other.

Hard to pin down modally, these poems disrupt expectations of narrative, lyric, and meditation, shape-shifting from one mode to the next in

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tautly wrought tercets (or, in the case of three poems, quatrains), moving from direct storytelling to reverie, to aphorism, to reflection, and back again to story. And the stories, at times domestic, at times mythic, are stories of the body and its capacity for pain—illness, abuse, brokenness. The stories harrow, for it seems, as in the poem "Luke 17:32," we are destined by our very longing to be punished: the complexity of the self, the intricacies of the body reduced to the elements:

> How is it in this second
>
> world, the one where we start over, that
> we still
> can't get the story right? Who
>
> cannot read shall not
> be saved.
> Who comes down from the housetop
>
> to gather his things for flight shall be
> lost.
> But where? said the twelve.
>
> Wherever the body is, there,
> said the one.
> And there (but whose?) the chapter
>
> ends, the body turned to salt again.

Short excerpts cannot suggest the elaborate and complex weave of these poems' procedures, but what amazes is the great distance they cover without transition or conjunction. They are at once elaborate and direct, and like parables, they delight, bewilder, and revel in their craftedness. For all the grief they catalog, these poems teach us "the leverage / of pain."

In Charles Wright's *Black Zodiac*, as in all his previous work, one finds a flawless ear for the melodic and rhythmic possibilities of a line of poetry in the American language. Wright possesses an alchemist's touch with the image, and a luminist's eye for the light that reveals and transfigures the given world. The given is what Wright continues to confront and trouble. His habit is that of the pilgrim on a spiritual itinerary, at times open-hearted, at times flint-hearted to the journey and to the sojourn.

Sadness reigns over the lyric intricacies of these meditations. This eschatological melancholia imbues *Black Zodiac* with a weight, gravity, and

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magnitude of wisdom, delivered, at times, with the wit of truth plainly said:

> If God hurt the way we hurt,
> he, too, would be heart-sore
> Disconsolate, unappeasable.

In *Black Zodiac*, one finds a solitary figure, an observer who contemplates the instability of memory. The philosophical, the theological, and the elemental are, at once, his way and his subject.

Wright is a collector of landscapes. Through iteration and through metaphor, he continually changes what is before his eyes and thus adds to his holdings. He builds to destroy to rebuild. The answer he seeks, he knows, is there *in* the landscape or accessible *through* the landscape, but is not yet found, not yet revealed. As a result, the meditations open in circles outward, attempting both to preserve what cannot be preserved—the past and the future—and to transcend it:

> John Ruskin says all clouds are masses of light, even the darkest ones.
> Hard to remember that these overcast afternoons,
> Midweek, ash-black and ash-white,
> negative shapes stretched in
> And luminous here and there in loose interstices
> Elbowed and stacked between earth and sky.
>
> Hard to remember that as the slipstream of memory shifts
> And shutters, massing what wasn't there as though it were.
> Where are the secret codes these days for nuking the Brenner Pass?
> And the Run, and the Trieste Station?
> Like sculptured mist, sharp-edged and cut into form, they slide on by.
>
> One only writes in order to erase again . . .

Although each of his poems stands firmly on its own, one could read Wright's new collection as an ambitious single lyric sequence that is expansive, rigorous, and incandescent. *Gnosis* is the destination of Wright's poems, but the path they offer is by no means spare or ascetic. Few poets can conjure as well-wrought a line as Charles Wright, and even fewer can offer lines that grow more beautiful, more complex, and more true each time we return to them.

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Jeffrey Harrison's second collection of poetry, *Signs of Arrival* , surpasses the promise of his graceful, quiet, and understated first collection, *The Singing Underneath*, which the late James Merrill selected as a winner of the National Poetry Series. In Harrison's work, the commonplace, the incidental, the exotic, and the miraculous all present themselves as the occasion for tranquil reflection, unflinching meditation, and the knotting of lyric intensity.

Many younger poets have been named the heir apparent to Elizabeth Bishop, but of all the younger poets I know, Harrison's work shares not only the subtle yet virtuoso musical gifts of Bishop's work, but a kinship of obsessions as well. What and where is the locality one can call *home*? How can one comprehend the exotic except in terms of the domestic and the domestic except in terms of the exotic?

The evidence of Harrison's poems suggests a stable and rich community of family. Instead of the sense one has in Bishop's work of dislocation, what one detects in Harrison is a restlessness as he moves from the domestic to the foreign, only to return again to the familiar and the familial. The book is structured to reflect this movement as well. The opening section is anchored in the home of his childhood. The middle section takes off to Turkey, Burma, Nepal, India, and elsewhere, and the third section concludes with home and the birth of his own children.

As with Bishop's work, Harrison's invites us with exacting clarity, and with a sense of good humor and awe in the face of the ordinary *and* the sublime, as in this passage from "Mayflies":

> Every day for a week we watch them
> appearing, as if out of nowhere,
> on the lake's surface, each one
> having risen as a nymph from the bottom
> and hatched into a creature lovely enough
> to make us stop rowing for a moment,
> our raised oars dripping quietly.
> Something about the graceful curve
> of its abdomen, and its tail
> of two fine filaments, like paintbrushes
> for depicting the minutest details.
> Something about its plight,
> its lifespan of a single day, the way
> it hardly stands a chance.
> Borne on that perilous interface, it must
> sit there, trembling, exposed from both sides
> to annihilation, gather its tiny wits,

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and wait for its delicate wings
to become firm enough for flight.

The entire collection is carefully made, and is as a whole patient in its pacing. Harrison's attractive modesty and attentive persona compel us at every turn of a line, as in his elegy for James Merrill, "A Gift." Harrison, who longs for a child, receives from Merrill a gift, a "helix of wheat," a "token of fertility":

other times
it hangs in shadow
and takes on the weight
of your death—
yet the thread holds. These months
I've felt the pull
of this wheatstalk whorl
again and again,
and thinking of you,
looked up to see it
suspended there
between two worlds,
in the changing light.

The sensational and the sentimental offer no temptation to Harrison, and yet the body's senses and the heart's well-measured sentiment are everywhere given shape and wholeness in *Signs of Arrival*.

In "St. Monica's at 17th and Ritner," W. S. Di Piero writes, "What god / lives with us in words? What word suffices?" Throughout *Shadows Burning*, Di Piero's sixth collection, the poet searches for the words that will suffice, for the words that will ring as poetry and yet be wholly American, an idiom at once wise and wisecracking, at once rich and rough-hewn, at once crafted and spontaneous. At the heart of this collection is America: America as a melting pot, as the interchange of immigrant cultures, and as the interstice between the urban and the suburban.

The first half of the book, a section called "Pacific," grows out of the poet's adult life in what seems to be suburban California, and the book's second section, "Atlantic," focuses on the urban East of the poet's childhood. The book concludes with a final section, a single poem called "Reading Ovid," which reads as a mock-defense of the method of the poems that we have just read. And while they need no defense, "Reading

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Ovid" calls up the complaints an impatient reader might have with the work—"You can't say a Senator, or his wife, screw dogs / and expect people to appreciate your style," or, "He's picking up the phlegmy local language; / he pretends to make small talk with the street vendors."

Like Crane and Williams before him, and like some other talented living poets (Alan Shapiro, C. K. Williams, and Jason Sommer come to mind), Di Piero has staked a claim at the interval between heightened poetic speech and the language hooks of advertising, between sincere oratory and a street-smart insult. Always, the poems surprise with the madcap tumble of roiling diction.

One of the most convincing poems in the collection is "Shrine with Flowers," a moving elegiac sequence that opens the collection. It possesses lyric ease, a well-balanced sense of sentiment, and resonant compassion. The other poem I keep returning to and marveling at in its cyclone-like attraction, its ability to pull anything and everything into its orbit and yet to maintain its form and its force, is "Saturday Afternoon." The following is but a glimpse of the world that soon becomes a Jonah-like descent into the belly of the great fish:

> But just then Charlie lifted me above his head, saying
> "O Billy Boy you've never in your life seen this! Want it?"
> The ground gone, steep drag of thinned air, chicken squawk
> tingling in my ears with dim human voices. Charlie threw me in the sea.
> The underplace, swallowing my heart, opened like a horn of plenty,
> blood channels lit blue and red like pinball arteries, flesh-motes,
> mucus, sinew, pulsing viscera bits dripping from the clothesline.

And on the belly of the "whale" we are offered:

> A flayed, ripening Christ.
> An Ohio puddler stirring pigiron mash, whose back is the same one
> in Giotto's Gethsemane that stays the hand slicing off a soldier's ear.
> Mercury, my heart, the sickening beautiful shiftingness of things.

And that is what W. S. Di Piero best captures throughout this collection—"the sickening beautiful shiftingness of things" in a language that takes the raw and the wrought and melds them.

ERIC PANKEY

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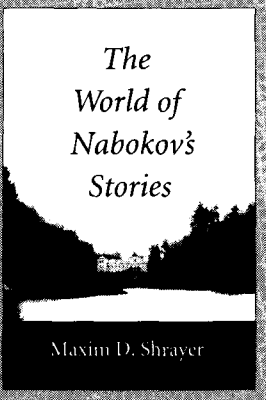

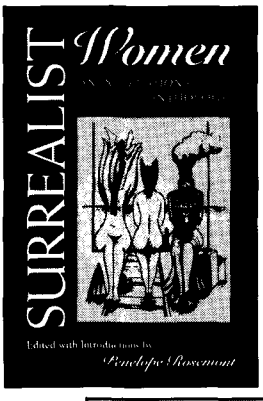

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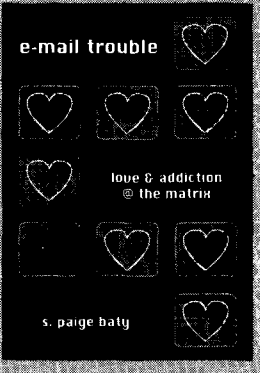

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